DORA WORDSWORTH HER BOOK

By

F. V. MORLEY

This fresh and illuminating contribution to literary history is based upon a very interesting autograph and commonplace book owned by Dora, the poet's daughter. Practically all the members of the Wordsworth circle wrote poems in Dora's book, including Coleridge, Landor, Southey, Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, and Charles Lamb. Using this as a nucleus, Mr. Morley presents a vivid picture of the Wordsworth circle and family life.

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HER BOOK

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by

F. V. MORLEY

with

PORTRAITS &
FACSIMILES

BOSTON & NEW YORK
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in Great Britain
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TO

S. M. S.

FOREWORD

I AM very grateful to Dr P. A. Steedman, of Oxford, the present owner of Dora Wordsworth's album, for permitting this book to exist. My thanks are likewise due to a number of experts who have been generous in aiding me; to Mr Thomas J. Wise, who lent me unpublished letters from his collection, and was generous in every manner possible; to Professor Edith Morley, who allowed me to use the results of her patient and scholarly researches among Crabb Robinson's letters; to Mrs G. A. Anderson, who cleared up many details of dates, and made such detective work interesting and pleasant,—and who is now, alas, beyond reach of these words; to Mr E. V. Lucas, who is never weary of helping the younger generation; to Mr Gordon Wordsworth, who let me use material of which he holds the copyright. Others too have my gratitude, but I shall say no more lest this small cruse seem filled entirely with borrowed oil. I should mention that a large part of the text appeared in *The Cornhill Magazine*, from which the Editor kindly allows me to reprint.

F. V. M.

EFFINGHAM, SURREY
September 1924

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INTRODUCTION

§ 1

HAD one been a visitor to Wordsworth's home at Rydal Mount, and of sufficient intimacy with the family, there would have been at least a glimpse of Dora Wordsworth's book. The poet's daughter, christened Dorothy after her aunt, but universally called Dora to avoid confusion, grew up in those 'sentimental emotional days, of L. E. L. and of Keepsakes and Mrs Hemans,' when, to paraphrase the rest of Lady Ritchie's remark, albums were paramount and album-writers in demand. Dora shared the custom of keeping an album; as time passed and the entries accumulated it became a treasure highly valued. At first the small book, nearly square, appeared in its natural binding of green tooled morocco; as a bookplate it had the name 'Dora Wordsworth' neatly written in decorative fashion, with a pen sketch as of heraldic arms. Later it was put by Dora into a blue silk cover with a brown design of flowers, a cover similar to those which her friends, Edith and Kate Southey, used to make for Southey's most valued books; and later still, the whole was inserted in a black silk case with a blue lining, with tapes attached for tying it both ways. The album is extant, though the silk case is a little faded, the lining somewhat worn, and the ink upon the pages growing faint.

The story of the album is the subject of this book; or rather, the stories suggested by the album form the subject. An album by itself is not neces-

sarily a valuable form of literary souvenir. The signatures may savour too much of formality, the neat entries may seem artificial and affected, as drawing-room tricks performed in the forenoon. Allusions pale, wit degenerates, what was meant for graceful tribute becomes flattery. The greater the contributor, the more open is his contribution to examination as an exhibition of folly; our temptation being, as De Quincey says, to smile with a sort of revenge, 'to set off against a painful perpetuity of homage.' If Dora's album had been, as many another album, an 'exercising ground for gymnastic displays of vanity and cleverness,' there would be little excuse for treating it in any other tone than one of levity. But there is something unusual about the small volume, if we approach it in a friendly spirit. There is a tale which pleased Southey, of a Spaniard who was fond of cherries, and whenever he ate them, put on spectacles to make them look larger and fairer. We must have this lenient disposition towards a dish that was not prepared for public consumption. Then, I think, the album will of its own right prove attractive. But after all, an album exists not so much for itself as for the pictures and the memories it recalls, and these are not always logically connected with the entries.

Lamb goes so far as to remark that Dora's album is 'a Banquet.' Viewed as such, the characters at the board are exceptional. There are altogether about sixty contributions, sometimes elaborate,

with dates running over a period of twenty years. We shall take them as they would come to a reader holding the album in his hand, and leisurely turning its pages. But we shall have to have a few dates, to make the situation clear. The beginning is in the summer of 1830, when Wordsworth was sixty and Dora twenty-six. In that year, to name a dozen of those who contributed at one time or another, Felicia Hemans was thirty-seven, Leigh Hunt forty-six, Thomas Moore fifty-one, Landor and Charles Lamb fifty-five, Southey fifty-six, Coleridge fifty-eight, Walter Scott fifty-nine, and Crabbe seventy-six. Matthew Arnold was then a boy of eight, Tennyson twenty-one, Sara Coleridge twenty-eight. At the date of the last entry, made by Sara Coleridge in 1850, the only survivors of the dozen mentioned were Moore, Landor, Leigh Hunt, Arnold, Tennyson, and herself. The entries go on, therefore, some time after Dora's death in 1847, and end a few months after the death of Wordsworth.

Many of the compositions throw light from odd angles on the contributors, but the person I desire especially to sketch is the recipient, Dora Wordsworth. Her life was bound up with Wordsworth's later years; for an adequate perspective it is necessary to sketch these also. Here we enter upon troubled waters. For the understanding of Wordsworth's poetry, for the appreciation of the noblest of his passages, his early life is all that need be

studied. Of the recent works devoted to the elaboration of this point, none is better than the late Sir Walter Raleigh's. 'It is,' he says, 'not merely that the formative period of a poet's life must always be the period of chief interest'; but, from the point of view of Wordsworth's poetry, 'no other period presents any interest at all.' To understand the young Wordsworth, up to the age of thirty-five, one need not take into account the long years which followed. Critics of poetry have therefore rightly and pleasantly excised the latter half of Wordsworth's life, as being dull, uninteresting, void of helpful matter for their quest. But on the other hand, if we deliberately look at Wordsworth's old age, we cannot sever it from what had gone before. The last half of his life depends upon the first; and as his character, and his relations with Dora, come now into our subject, we turn back a few years to trace such threads as are for us essential.

§ 2

It was not Wordsworth's fortune to leave the world at the flood-time of his inspiration, and during the period with which we are concerned he lived on while the tide was followed, in Raleigh's phrase, 'by a long and wandering ebb.' By 1830 the ebb had been running for some twenty years, with an occasional, rare resurgence. It is no part of the present book, devoted almost wholly to

minutiae, to enter into any elaboration of the central problem set by Wordsworth's poetical career —the problem which is summed up by saying that although his pen was in hand for sixty years, of the resulting poems almost all of greatest worth were the product of a single decade. Yet I must extend the summary far enough to support one conclusion. The *decas mirabilis*, as Professor Garrod calls it, was the period between 1797 and 1807. There are, of course, exceptions to such a blunt statement. Before 1797 Wordsworth had written much of promise; after 1807, and in some cases long after, he touched old, familiar chords again. But the decade takes in nearly all his work that is unquestionably fine, and includes very little of that which his admirers 'would wish away.' In Professor Garrod's words, the ten years' period is 'an oasis of power and splendour amid endless arid tracts of middling performance.' Wordsworth himself sought fitfully to answer the problem, though perhaps he would not have agreed to formulate it in these terms.

Wordsworth's own picture of his life starts with a boy whom his parents knew to be 'remarkable either for good or evil,' judging from his 'stiff, moody and violent temper,' and impulsive, passionate nature. There are stories of his slashing a whip through an old family portrait, simply because his brother was afraid to do so; again, of his attempting to commit suicide because of some fancied slight. But despite his parents' feeling, there was

nothing very unusual about this type of action; what was unusual was the extreme joy and rapture that filled him in the presence of nature. The secret joy continued with him during the days at Cambridge. Shortly after he finished his college course he entered upon a struggle between his conscience and his impulses which made him dismiss thoughts of the Church; conscience dictating, I imagine, that it was his duty to take orders, and impulses urging towards a more adventurous career. He had thoughts of military life, and believed that he had talents for command. One great event filled his mind and fired his ambition. With all his training in the direction of nature and freedom, with his innate and naïve belief in the fitness and necessity of democracy, the French Revolution seemed to him 'nothing out of nature's certain course,' and 'a gift that was come rather late than soon.' His heart was 'given to the people' before he went to France. 'The joy of life,' says Raleigh, 'and the sure and easy faith in a glorious outcome for the new spirit of fraternity possessed him, to the exclusion of reflection.' Upon his first visit to France he joined in the national rejoicings with gay and buoyant fervour:

> 'Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
> But to be young was very Heaven! O times
> In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
> Of custom, law, and statute took at once
> The attraction of a country in romance!'

Falling in at Lyons with a company of delegates returning from Paris, Wordsworth and his companion joined the group and sailed down the Rhone:

'In this proud company
We landed—took with them our evening meal,
Guests welcome almost as the angels were
To Abraham of old. The supper done,
With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts
We rose at signal given, and formed a ring,
And, hand in hand, danced round and round the board;
All hearts were open, every tongue was loud
With amity and glee; . . .
And round and round the board we danced again.'

We need not follow him in Paris as a patriot; need not introduce the question of his love for Annette Vallon; need not recount the conversations with Beaupuis; the total effect was a stirring in him of emotions of profound importance, akin to those of his early rapturous and disturbing intercourse with nature. As one corollary, political and social questions passed out of the domain of cold theory into a living and vital significance.

The decisive recall issued by his guardians caught him in Paris, while he was in the flush of revolutionary ideas, and on the point of taking an active part in the tragedy that was unfolding. As he looks back in later years, he sees that had he done so,

'Doubtless, I should have then made common cause
With some who perished; haply perished too,

A poor mistaken and bewildered offering,—
Should to the breast of Nature have gone back,
With all my resolutions, all my hopes,
A Poet only to myself.'

The letter of his guardians prevented any actual participation, and enforced his return, however unwillingly, to London. 'The consequence was that from first to last he watched the Revolution with other eyes than those of a partisan. He was forbidden to act, but he saw and suffered the more.' Debarred from physical outlet for his thoughts, the failure of the revolutionary idea, and the collapse of his first passion, struck him doubly hard. Now that his instinctive trust in human happiness was uprooted, he turned in a mood of despairing scepticism to philosophy,

'Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,
Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,
Suspiciously, to establish in plain day
Her titles and her honours; now believing,
Now disbelieving; endlessly perplexed
With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the ground
Of obligation, what the rule and whence
The sanction; till, demanding formal *proof*,
And seeking it in everything, I lost
All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,
Sick, wearied out with contrarieties,
Yielded up moral questions in despair.'

In the 'crisis of that strong disease,' when

'. . . natural graciousness of mind
Gave way to overpressure from the times
And their disastrous issues,'

he felt that more than moral questions must go by the board. He felt that all his visionary experiences and his early ebullitions

> '. . . were not free from taint
> Of something false and weak, that could not stand
> The open eye of Reason.'

Restlessly then,

> 'In such strange passion, if I may once more
> Review the past, I warred against myself—
> A bigot to the new idolatry—
> Like a cowled monk who hath forsworn the world,
> Zealously laboured to cut off my heart
> From all the sources of her former strength;
> And as, by simple waving of a wand,
> The wizard instantaneously dissolves
> Palace or grove, even so could I unsoul
> As readily by syllogistic words
> Those mysteries of being which have made,
> And shall continue evermore to make,
> Of the whole human race one brotherhood.
>
> 'What wonder, then, if, to a mind so far
> Perverted, even the visible Universe
> Fell under the dominion of a taste
> Less spiritual, with microscopic view
> Was scanned, as I had scanned the moral world?'

The final outcome of Wordsworth's youthful efforts to adjust the world of men was the conviction

> 'Earth is sick,
> And Heaven is weary, of the hollow words
> Which States and Kingdoms utter when they talk
> Of truth and justice.'

The result is close to Byron's admission that 'I have simplified my politics into an utter detestation of all existing governments.' As a critic of Byron has well said, 'when mind has been quenched in fancy, will in passion, the earliest to dissolve are the objective values. Religion softens to a mirage, society hardens to a tyranny.... To the chaos made without there answers chaos from within, and the last word is spoken by the Abbot in *Manfred*.

> "This should have been a noble creature: he
> Hath all the energy which would have made
> A goodly frame of glorious elements,
> Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
> It is an awful chaos—light and darkness
> And mind and dust and passions and pure thoughts
> Mix'd, and contending without end or order—
> All dormant or destructive: he will perish."'

Wordsworth's feet were firmer placed than Byron's, his character more durable. The struggle was met with intense, if despairing, effort. In the utter loss of hope itself and things to hope for, when all things tended fast to depravation, Wordsworth would not permit himself to walk with scoffers, nor to sit down in reconcilement with an utter waste of intellect. He was not free from external difficulties as well as strife within. He had no income, no prospects, and was constitutionally incapable of bending to the yoke of earning a living. The problem of Annette was yet to be solved. But when the immediate necessities of life were settled by the bequest of Raisley Calvert, he took arms

against his troubles by writing *The Borderers*, the dramatic poem whose underlying tone of protest has been often noted[1]. Besides the exposure of the philosophic villain, Oswald, so much of moral as the drama contains is in the following:

> 'Action is transitory—a step, a blow,
> The motion of a muscle—this way or that—
> 'Tis done, and in the after-vacancy
> We wonder at ourselves like men betrayed:
> Suffering is permanent, obscure, and dark,
> And shares the nature of infinity.'

This outlook was not to last. Though he turned away in disappointment and despair from politics, though he was forced to leave all studies that involved human nature—'that element of disease and uncertainty'—he was incapable of facing with Promethean consistency the prospect of an unintelligible world. Protest alone would never satisfy him, would never give him that inner, turbulent joy which he remembered as his birthright. Resolutely he turned to the one source uncontaminated, to abstract science, the

> '. . . independent world,
> Created out of pure intelligence.'

[1] Swinburne's analysis of the tragedy, in his essay on *Wordsworth and Byron*, comes perilously near the unfair method of comic summary, which is easily and often misapplied. Mr Gosse once jotted down some fragments of conversation with Swinburne which are interesting in this connection: 'Swinburne expressing great admiration of it [*The Borderers*] as a juvenile production, and noting with surprise the morbid hectic tone of its ethics. He would like to know what was passing in Wordsworth's life when he wrote it. . . .'

His object was to find

> 'Work for the reasoning faculty enthroned
> Where the disturbances of space and time...
> Find no admission.'

It is as if, in desiring to escape from the extreme of rationalism, he had doubted reason. Geometry has ever been sanative to minds perturbed by their own strength. But how to reconcile this half-confidence with his old joy, to make room not for his mind but for his feelings? This question was the crux of the conflict, prolonged and arduous and vital to the young Wordsworth. The solution, as far as one may phrase its cruder aspect, lay in discarding neither 'love' nor 'reason,' but by linking them as servants of the one highest faculty, 'imagination.' The harmonizing process, with its revival of hopes and the sudden and in part inexplicable growth of healthy power, took place in 1797. It is as marvellous and vivid as dawn after blackest night. There is, 'without any forewarning, a swift springtime of clear song.' To quote Raleigh once more:

> 'He regained his old communion, yet it was not the same. The calm of Nature now seemed to conceal an acquaintance with grief; the memories of childhood were as if they had contained implicitly from the first all the passion of humanity. The solemnities and beauties that had surrounded him, and by the perfect composure of their silent endurance had deluded him into a belief of Arcadia, were now seen to be the pillars of a tragic theatre.

And with this came the sense of consolation; for the stars and the mountains were unchanged, yet the stars and the mountains knew. The heart of the poet went out to these strong witnesses in an ecstasy of sensibility and tenderness, tremulous with the need for expression.'

The rehabilitation, as he explains, did not come from any merely logical solution for his fundamental question, but from a sudden consciousness of freedom. His heart woke 'not by forced parallel but by perceived identity.' With light feet he hurried upwards from the city of Dis. His course proceeded apace, when once it began. The restoration of the life of the emotions was aided, in part inspired, by the presence of his sister Dorothy; and his philosophical ideas rapidly took form under the spell of the extraordinary young man who sought him out at Racedown and captivated him with a tumultuous flow of conversation. Coleridge, lesser than Wordsworth and greater, interrupted and overwhelmed Wordsworth's own narrower round of meditation. Fresh from his own 'book of morals in answer to Godwin,' Coleridge was anxious to compare and willing to comprehend. He enthusiastically discerned Wordsworth's 'union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing, with the imaginative faculty in modifying, the objects observed; and above all the original gift of spreading the tone, the atmosphere, and with it the depth and height of the ideal world around forms, incidents, and situations, of which,

for the common view, custom had bedimmed all the lustre, had dried up the sparkle and the dew drops.' It is wrong to derive Wordsworth's steady river from a perforation made in Coleridge's tank; at the same time there is no doubt that Coleridge made Wordsworth a better poet than he found him. No sooner had he felt than he sought to understand the above characteristics. He at once began to meditate aloud, and Wordsworth's more regular mind began to follow after. The joint inquiry into fancy and imagination was started, with the *Lyrical Ballads* as one result, and the *Preface* to them as another.

Let us now see how the rebirth affected the ruling ambition of Wordsworth's life. As far back as 1795, when Raisley Calvert left him the means of planning for himself, his hope in happier moments had been towards

> '. . . some philosophic song
> Of truth that cherishes our daily life;
> With meditations passionate from the deep
> Recesses in man's heart, immortal verse
> Thoughtfully fitted to the Orphean lyre.'

This ambition was interrupted, overwhelmed by his dejection. He now regained the thought of analysing his own fitness for such an undertaking, told his scheme to Coleridge, and was enthusiastically backed in the resolve. The chosen name was *The Recluse*. It was to be, in Coleridge's capitals, 'the FIRST GENUINE PHILOSOPHIC POEM.'

Wordsworth began the 'long, subtle, and searching self-examination' which was to form the prelude. Coleridge wrote to Cottle on March 8, 1798:

'He [Wordsworth] has written more than 1200 lines of a blank verse superior, I hesitate not to aver, to anything in our language which any way resembles it. Poole... thinks of it as likely to benefit mankind much more than anything Wordsworth has yet written.'

When the poem held fire, Coleridge wrote (in 1799):

'My dear friend, I do entreat you to go on with "The Recluse," and I wish you would write a poem, in blank verse, addressed to those, who, in consequence of the complete failure of the French Revolution, have thrown up all hopes of the amelioration of mankind, and are sinking into an almost epicurean selfishness, disguising the same under the soft titles of domestic attachment and contempt for visionary *philosophes*. It would do great good, and might form a part of "The Recluse," for in my present mood I am wholly against the publication of any small poems[1].'

The philosophic poem was to be in two parts: *The Prelude* and *The Recluse*. The relation between the two, as Wordsworth says, was to be that of an ante-chapel to the body of a Gothic church. All his smaller works would be as 'little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.' *The Recluse* was to have three divisions, each approximately equal in size to *The Prelude*. Wordsworth was to be master-builder, craftsman, quarry, all in one. The very flag-stones

[1] For Wordsworth's acceptance of the advice, see *Prelude*, II. 432–451.

were to be 'immortal verse.' No completed epic that we have exceeds Wordsworth's design; his was to be the memorial, in a field removed from action, of the philosophic mind. He set enormous value on the work, made it the bed of all his hopes. When once he started it seemed that he would finish. Few shadows fell across his path, few warnings shook his confidence. And yet, despite determination, the edifice is incomplete. The *Prelude* is written, and one part of the *Recluse*. The antechapel and one transept remain, showing the scale of what Wordsworth called a church, but dreamed as a cathedral. For the rest, we have scattered fragments.

A parallel has been drawn with Coleridge, when he planned a great work to be called *Autobiographia Literaria*. The *Biographia Literaria* was to form merely a preface; but as time went on it grew and gradually swelled into the work itself. So, it has been said, with Wordsworth. When he at last finished the *Prelude*, he found it had absorbed a large part of what he had to say. The failure of the plan is thus in part due to redistribution of the material. But the failure is also due to a less controllable factor; to a strike, if we may use the phrase, within the workman. There was a change of spirit, an alteration, in his poetic powers. By 1807 they were becoming fitful in attendance.

The evidence of Coleridge had worried him before. Coleridge, who had the secret of celestial

ichor, was always a phenomenon that slightly puzzled Wordsworth. The very extension of Coleridge's friendship was secretly astonishing. Wordsworth could break his barriers to very few; whole-heartedly to nature, whole-heartedly to Dorothy and to Dora, but to hardly a soul beside. He made a greater effort to understand Coleridge than he cared to make for any other living man, but he did not wholly comprehend his friend. Coleridge had urged and in some measure was responsible for Wordsworth's Gothic church; it is conceivable that he was partially and unwittingly responsible for its lack of completion. From 1797 on, there had been five years of unremitting labour during which the force and actuality of happy insight formed an abiding feature of Wordsworth's life. Came then the situation which led to what Coleridge calls 'the immortal Ode on Immortality.' Sickness and 'afflictions' had forced Coleridge away from poetry, and 'into downright metaphysics.' Early in 1802 he returned to Keswick after an absence of four months. He was in despondent mood, and was tempted to contrast his own despair with Wordsworth's serenity and conviction. Yielding to the solace of song, he drafted an ode, *Dejection*, and completed a first version on April 4. It was originally addressed to Wordsworth, and an extract, as it then stood, is as follows[1]:

[1] The first version was printed in *The Morning Post* for October 4, 1802. Another version appeared in *Felix Farley's Bristol Journal* in

'All this long eve, so balmy and serene,
Have I been gazing on the Western sky,
And its peculiar tint of yellow-green:
And still I gaze—and with how blank an eye!
And those thin clouds above, in flakes and bars,
That give away their motion to the stars;
Those stars, that glide behind them, or between,
Now sparkling, now bedimm'd, but always seen;
Yon crescent moon, as fix'd as if it grew
In its own cloudless, starless lake of blue,
A boat becalm'd! thy own sweet sky-canoe!
I see them all, so excellently fair!
I see, not *feel*, how beautiful they are.

'My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smoth'ring weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west;
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.'

Here becomes apparent a divergence between the two men, of which they became increasingly aware. As in other matters of their mature and distinct philosophies, Coleridge insisted on informing the senses from the mind, Wordsworth in compounding a mind out of the senses. The

1814. Textual variations were already numerous, and there were many more changes when it was finally reprinted in *Sibylline Leaves* (1817). The line

'A boat becalm'd! thy own sweet sky-canoe!'

refers to the Prologue of *Peter Bell*. It was deleted in later versions of the ode.

point of divergence is important, and vital to the question which Coleridge was raising, the question of the loss of poetic vision. The debate seems to have started immediately on Coleridge's return to the Lakes. Coleridge knew that the greatest poet was 'no mere child of nature; no *automaton* of genius; no passive vehicle of inspiration possessed by the spirit, not possessing it'; but a man who 'first studied patiently, meditated deeply, understood minutely, till knowledge, become habitual and intuitive, wedded itself to his habitual feelings,' and at length gave birth to stupendous power. Yet the power, though possessed, was not wholly commanded. The commission was entrusted only for a period. As it came, so might it depart. In short, Coleridge maintained, from his own knowledge, that of all investments poetry was the most precarious. There is no doubt that this attitude greatly disturbed Wordsworth. He hastened to reassure himself. He answered Coleridge immediately in *My heart leaps up* and in his own Ode. There he formulates the question, 'when eyes and ears, in which we have put our trust, cease to give us vision and the sound of the world, what have we to fall back upon?' The reply is not complete. It is more a confused affirmation that the 'beauty-making power' is still with him, than as yet a full recognition of what is meant by its departure.

But the recognition was to come, despite Coleridge's prayer

'Full seldom may my friend such vigils keep,'

and Wordsworth was to experience the

> '. . . strange half-absence, as of one
> Knowing too well the importance of his theme,
> But feeling it no longer.'

He did not complete the Ode at once. He returned to the *Recluse* and to the lesser and happier efforts of translating pure emotion. When the Ode was finished, after several years, it was not a resolution of all difficulties. It does not ring true as an affirmation of joy. It is overcast with heavy, brooding, disturbed thought. 'I have the feeling,' says Professor Garrod, 'that amid the philosophic doubts which Wordsworth had thus raised himself, and us, he stood, in 1807, in a situation more perplexed than either his pride could allow or his unaided reflections expedite. Perhaps only Coleridge could have helped him—Coleridge with his careless gift (to no one more acceptable than to Wordsworth) of bestowing benefits with the fine air of a man who receives them. Coleridge was, in any case, one of those minds which startle other minds out of the *ordinariness* which so easily besets most men, and besets at fitful intervals even genius. We have noticed already how Wordsworth was conscious of, and even emphasizes the presence of, a certain ordinariness in his own nature and habits. He saw himself as in general a very boyish boy, and again as a very average undergraduate, and yet again as a youth

like so many others, vacillating between rebellion and listlessness. Yet he beheld always, as it were, a silver thread of "vision" variegating this ordinariness, in all periods of its manifestation. Coleridge also saw the ordinariness. He lamented in Wordsworth, says Hazlitt, "a something corporeal, a matter-of-factness, a clinging to the palpable." Nor did it, as we all know, escape the observation of De Quincey, who so often, in his account of Wordsworth, replaces the poet by the shrewd and hard-headed and somewhat contentious Dalesman. Coleridge, as I say, was one of those men in whose presence it is difficult to be ordinary. He had (with whatever faults) that generosity of temper which rouses others to their proper greatness—the mere sound of his voice was, as Hazlitt says, "the music of thought." The withdrawal of his influence carried with it, for Wordsworth, not only, as I think, philosophical impoverishment, but a kind of relapse into ordinariness—like a man relapsing into some sensual indulgence; he drugs himself with the humdrum of political and social and religious orthodoxy; and only now and again, in some mysteriously appointed casual re-awakening, does he shake off the influence—else ever intensifying—of the deadly opiate.'

This relapse cannot be denied; but its quality must not be distorted and its rapidity must not be over-emphasized. More than most men, poets are twice born and die twice over. The storm and struggle of Wordsworth's second birth was

not a mighty pother about nothing. It showed the intensity and the importance to him of his gift, for which he was willing to throw away all other prospects in life. Upon the permanence of the gift he based a scheme of work which was to occupy a lifetime. And when that power left, when the vision fled, whether by his own fault or by some deprivation out of his control, he was not one to sink down meekly and compose himself to slumber. Better, perhaps, had he done so; better, perhaps, that he should no more wander, when the wandering, after his loss, was to be vain. 'Where the spirit of a man,' says Coleridge in a passage in which he seems to be speaking of Wordsworth and of himself, 'is not *filled* with the consciousness of freedom (were it only from its restlessness, as of one still struggling in bondage) all spiritual intercourse is interrupted, not only with others, but even with himself. No wonder, then, that he remains incomprehensible to himself as well as to others. No wonder, that, in the fearful desert of his consciousness, he wearies himself out with empty words, to which no friendly echo answers, either from his own heart, or the heart of a fellow being; or bewilders himself in the pursuit of *notional* phantoms, the mere refractions from unseen and distant truths through the distorting medium of his own unenlivened and stagnant understanding!'

Not that Wordsworth was continually conscious of the change that made him poor. He refused to

be conscious of it, continually put the thought behind him, and clung to his high ambition. There were long periods when a singular lack of critical faculty permitted him to hope that various acres of laboured verse would bring forth luxuriant growths; long periods when he industriously covered any cracks in that great edifice, the *Recluse*. There were still pride and obstinacy and outward confidence masking any secret fears. But he could not conceal his weakness from the more penetrating of his contemporaries. Shelley wrote, about 1815,

> 'Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine
> On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar:
> Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood
> Above the blind and battling multitude:
> In honoured poverty thy voice did weave
> Songs consecrate to truth and liberty,—
> Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,
> Thus having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.'

A passage in Crabb Robinson's diary gives Coleridge's opinion:

> 'Dec. 21, 1822.—Dined at Aders', to meet Coleridge. He had not seen Wordsworth's last works, and spoke less highly of his immediately preceding writings than he used to do (and still does) of his earlier works. He reproaches him with a vulgar attachment to orthodoxy, in its literal sense. The latter end of *The Excursion*, he says, is distinguished from the former; and he can ascertain by internal evidence the newest from the early compositions among his works. He reproaches Wordsworth with a disregard to the mechanism of his verse, and, in general, insinuates a decline of his faculties.'

Crabb Robinson is not wholly right in thinking this last criticism due to 'personal feelings of unkindness.'

Wordsworth never connected the decline of his faculties with his adherence to conservatism. He would not have entertained Coleridge's or Shelley's desire that he should do away with the 'I and my brother the Dean' manner. All in his immediate neighbourhood held with Sancho Panza: 'Your worship,' said Sancho, 'would make a better preacher than knight-errant.' This became common sense to Wordsworth. As many another saw him, so he saw himself—a patriarch, set aloft in a high place. But at the same time he gradually realized that he saw but fitfully, that his powers were decaying. Still, he refused to die. There were, it is true, times of yielding to the 'deadly opiate'; there were times of struggling in ungraceful attitudes; but for many and long periods he would not relinquish the restless craving for illumination. This second battle of his life was slow and stubborn warfare, unlike the swift and earlier engagement. To dismiss it lightly is to give too little credit to his character. In the contest he was softened, mellowed, and transformed in many ways.

One way of seeing how the struggle went—and here we come to the reason for this introduction—is to study Wordsworth's relations with Dora. When he became fully aware of the loss of vision,

'. . . of the light
Full early lost and fruitlessly deplored,'

he makes it clear in many ways that he seeks in Dora a daughter to be more than his Antigone. He tried strenuously to recapture, in her companionship, the eyes and ears which Dorothy had given to him many years before. At best, he expected to see only by glimpses; yet it was true to all his philosophical beliefs that

'. . . feeling comes in aid
Of feeling, and diversity of strength
Attends us, if but once we have been strong.'

If all the circumstances of his early restoration were repeated, might not the experience be repeated? It would be tedious to note how many of the same experiments, how many of the same tours, were undertaken in this hope. In moods of depression, Dora was in his mind as the one source possible, outside himself, of his rejuvenation. Dorothy, at the time our story opens, was a broken woman. Coleridge was a changed man, drifted apart, a will-o'-the-wisp confusedly dancing with his own 'notional phantoms.' But Dora was ever present, a 'living staff,' and in Dora was still hope. Not only did he love her as a daughter, but as a virgin who might tend the flame upon his altar.

§ 3

In picturing Dora before the time at which our scene opens, we do not need to look back upon

anything but a natural girlhood. When she was four or five, she had, besides the other children, De Quincey—'Kinsey,' to the small folk—and Coleridge to play with. At this stage Dorothy writes to Mrs Clarkson:

'D. is very pretty, very kittenish, very quick, very clever, but not given to *thought*. Coleridge often repeats to her (altering a line of William's poem of *Ruth*), "the wild cat of the wilderness was not so fair as she." To this she replies with a squall, inviting him to some fresh skirmish.'

The various sketches in Wordsworth's poems do not give much to go upon; a woman writing to a woman is more definite. In 1813 the family moved to Rydal Mount, 'the nicest place in the world for children,' says Dorothy; and there we have a few words dated April 4, 1816, when Dora was eleven:

'She is lively, affectionate, and quick in faculties; but is often wayward and has fits of obstinacy with pride. Of vanity she has little or none, and is utterly free from envy. She is a fine-looking girl, but at times her face is very plain, at other times it is even beautiful. She is rather stout and tall, but neither in the extreme, holds her head up well, has a broad chest, and good shoulders, but walks and runs most awkwardly....'

From that 'leggy' stage she developed into a tall, graceful, and very pleasant-faced young woman with light-brown hair; delicate rather than of robust appearance; with an expression and smile of singular sweetness.

When Dora was seventeen a young married

couple, Mr and Mrs Quillinan, came to live near Rydal Mount, and became very friendly with the Wordsworths. Edward Quillinan was born in Oporto in 1791; he was sent to school in England, but, being a Catholic, did not go to either of the Universities. Instead, he returned to Portugal in 1807, and shortly after joined the army. When he was nineteen he had three duels on his hands as the result of verses in which he had rashly caricatured some of the officers of his own regiment; but he came successfully out of these early quarrels, and, in 1817, married Jemima Brydges. After a period in Ireland, he was quartered at Penrith in 1820–21; and having long been an enthusiastic admirer of Wordsworth, at this time sought to meet him in person. He was provided with an introduction by a mutual friend in Edinburgh, which painted him in glowing colours. He rode off with this in pocket, but as he approached Rydal he felt ashamed of presenting it, and, embarrassed by the problem of approaching Wordsworth, returned indecisively to Penrith. In a few days, leaving the letter behind, he came again and introduced himself; with such pleasant results that in 1821 he left the service and settled in the Vale of Rydal, in a house—Ivy Cottage, just below Rydal Mount—taken for him by Wordsworth. It was for the latter's neighbourhood, 'even more than for the beauty of the district,' that Quillinan became a resident at the Lakes. Shortly after his arrival he made an excursion with

the poet to Fountains Abbey and other parts of Yorkshire.

During the next year a tragic misfortune happened to the newcomers. Mrs Quillinan had been ill for some time after the birth of her second daughter; while she was convalescent her dressing-gown caught fire, and she was burned severely. She died within a few days in Ivy Cottage. Dorothy Wordsworth, who had been very kind to the young couple, was present at the last, and lent whatever aid was possible; but the tragedy, in its suddenness and agony, was a great shock to all, and a tremendous grief to Quillinan. Dora became, for a time, as a mother to the two little girls, Jemima and Rotha—the latter Wordsworth's god-child; then Quillinan took his children to Lee Priory, in Kent, and himself went wandering upon the Continent. On his return he stayed with his brother-in-law at Lee Priory, and generally lived there or at his own house in Bryanston Street till 1832.

The Wordsworths, however, did not intend that the widower should be forsaken by his friends. They planned a tour in Belgium and Holland for the summer of 1823, and Mrs Wordsworth wrote, from their halting-place in Cambridge, that she, Wordsworth, and Dora hoped to stay some days with him *en route*. The visit was a joy to Quillinan, and it was repeated in June, when the Wordsworths returned from the Continent. Contact was fairly regular from then on, and indeed before very long

Quillinan began to play his part in cheering up the Wordsworth family. They were entering one of the happily infrequent periods of depression, from which the family alone had difficulty in raising itself. Dora, whose health gave them cause for worry, was critically ill in 1826; and the death of Sir George Beaumont early in 1827—the first gap in the friends of Wordsworth's middle life—likewise weighed down the group at Rydal Mount. The strain of correcting the poems for the 1827 edition fell upon a household of tired nerves; the labour fell upon the women as well as upon Wordsworth, and added to their task of ministering to a man in low spirits.

Of the first of these causes for depression, we see something in a sequence of letters from the family. On January 6, 1827, Dorothy writes to Crabb Robinson:

'My dear niece's health is very much improved. She gains strength and flesh. True, she is still invalidish, and will probably be so during the winter; but there seems to be no present cause for anxiety, and, through God's blessing, we trust to the spring for perfect restoration.'

A few weeks later the news is:

'Poor Dora is now confined to her room; but this is at present owing to the severe weather, for the cough which first proved her overthrow has been subdued by a blister. My brother's heart would be as much fixed as ever upon Italy were not anxiety kept almost constantly alive. It is our decided opinion that she ought not to pass the next

winter here, and all schemes must give way to her benefit. If she be strong enough for so very long a journey, a winter in Italy might be the best. But funds will, I am afraid, be deficient, and it is probable that some warm nook on the southern shore of England may be fixed upon when summer comes, the time for deciding.'

Towards the end of February:

'My niece is much the same—not worse, but very delicate; and we are unceasingly anxious, during this cold weather, to keep her from injury. The present morning has brought that kind of fine weather which is delightful to the strong for exercise, but very trying to invalids, though confined wholly to the house as she is....'

Six months later, in August, Mrs Wordsworth writes to John Kenyon:

'Dora, whom you so kindly inquire after, is no longer an invalid, she is become as strong as I ever remember her to have been, but this happy state is only to be depended upon so long as the beautiful weather lasts. She is a complete *air* gauge. As soon as damp is felt, the trouble in her throat returns; something connected with the trachea, that causes a cough and other inconveniences. To keep this enemy aloof, she is not to winter in our weeping climate; therefore before the next rainy season sets in, perhaps in a very few weeks, she with myself for her attendant mean to quit our pleasant home and friends; but we mean to go to others and make ourselves as joyous as we can....'

The letter is not over-cheerful, but it contains an indication of better news. Mrs Wordsworth goes on to mention a picnic, and intimates that Quillinan was present and a guest at Rydal for

some days. It begins to appear that he was interested in Dora. Indeed, in 1828, he broached the question of marriage to her father, and so a theme was opened which was to remain for many years unsettled. In speaking of Wordsworth we have seen what Dora's loss would mean to him. Quillinan never called himself 'the noblest Youth of the present time.' He knew that two facts were against him in Wordsworth's eyes—he was a Catholic, and a widower a little past the first flush of his prime. Yet Dora was unaccountably fond of him. Wordsworth had previously and firmly refused the advances of a cousin, but he too liked Quillinan, and listened to his suit with favour. He would not commit himself to a date, but still he listened, and revolved the possibilities. Dora was happy, in her shy way, to see how things were going.

In May of that year the Wordsworths spent some days with Quillinan in London, and a sprightly letter from Dora to her cousin Christopher Wordsworth, then at Cambridge, will give an indication of the way they passed their time:

'12 Bryanston Street, Portman Square.
'[Post Mark] *May* 14th, 1828.

'My dear Cousin:—Last night Lady Davy took myself and father to the opera, where I saw and heard Madame Sontag. You will smile at your country cousin's bold critique, but bear in mind that it is done at your own request —with a wish to give pleasure; and will at any rate be a proof that my thoughts are with you in this bustling wilder-

ness, and that I am ready to seize the first opportunity of flying back to Cambridge, where I spent such a *sunny* month (I mean heart sunshine), and deeply do I feel all the *affectionate* and *affecting* kindness shown me by yourself and dear John. Now to my story. Madame Sontag is a delicious nightingale! her flexibility of voice perfectly amazing—exceedingly sweet, though not heart-stirring: of this father complains much. Her figure is light and pretty, hand and arm exquisite, foot pretty, but no pretensions to beauty of physiognomy—at least, at the distance I saw her. Her manner is winning and agreable, and her voice and singing "in perfect unison with the scene" (of Figure, etc.); and it appears to me that the world is tolerably justified in bestowing on her its praises. Of friends, the most interesting, Sir Walter Scott, Rogers, Mr Kenyon, and others too numerous to name. Mr Quillinan has taken my mother to call upon Mrs Hoare. Father at breakfast with Crabbe Robinson in the Temple, and I alone at home to receive all their visitors.... I wonder how dear uncle is. I want to see him, but shall be "fearfully shamed," for I have got such a hat! and had a Frenchman last night to dress my hair for the opera, who cut off all my dangling curls, and made my head precisely like the ladies you see in their windows. Breakfast, dinner, and evening engagements are overwhelming us; *truly*, I am sighing for Rydal rest....But how did the bumping go on last night? St Johns still triumphant? You must be sure to tell us how it goes on. Father means to call upon his bookseller this morning. Lockhart breakfasted here with Sir Walter; I like him better than I did. Here comes Miss Douglas, and no father. What—Father just come in. I can write no more.'

In June, Dora, Coleridge, and Wordsworth

(with a carpet bag borrowed from Crabb Robinson) set off for a tour through Belgium and up the Rhine. On this tour Coleridge 'seemed to breathe in words'; Wordsworth, according to a traveller who met them, was more restrained, with 'something unobtrusively amiable in his bearing towards his daughter.'

Shortly after their return a serious blow fell upon the family. In November, 1828, Dorothy Wordsworth had gone to Whitwick, near Ashby, to keep house for her nephew, John Wordsworth, who appears in Dora's letter quoted above. She was fifty-six, but kept up the practice of long country walks, in which perhaps she overstrained herself. At any rate, at Whitwick she became seriously ill; characteristically, she concealed the gravity of her illness from the household at Rydal until she was on the road to recovery. In the spring, as soon as Mrs Wordsworth heard the news, she went to Whitwick and stayed there for some time as nurse. Wordsworth writes to Crabb Robinson in April of the danger that had been escaped:

'What a shock that was to our poor hearts! Were she to depart, the phase of my moon would be robbed of light to a degree that I have not courage to think of. During her illness we have often thought of your high esteem for her goodness, and of your kindness towards her upon all occasions.... Mrs Wordsworth is still with her, and I have entreated her to stay ten days more. Dora is my housekeeper, and did she not hold the pen it would run wild in her praises. Sara Coleridge, one of the loveliest and best of

creatures, is with me, so that I am an enviable person, notwithstanding our domestic impoverishment. Mrs Coleridge is here also; and, if pity and compassion for others' anxieties were a sweet sensation, I might be envied on that account also, for I have enough of it.'

For the time being Dorothy's recovery was satisfactory.

The main characters have now been introduced. What remains is to piece together, from evidence which is sometimes full and sometimes scanty, their actions during the period covered by the album. We do not know much of the meetings between Dora and Quillinan, which may have been frequent. We know that in 1829 Quillinan was at Rydal Mount, for he dates some verses there. A letter to him from Dora on November 14, in playful, pretty mood, indicates that it is not the first in which she acknowledged herself his lover. A phrase of Dorothy's about this time may have some bearing; it describes Dora 'as lively as a lark.' Early in 1830 Wordsworth wrote several letters to Quillinan, the latter acting as an intermediary in a business transaction. Some have not hitherto been published, and come to me now by the kindness of Mr Wise. In the first (February 4) he says:

'Poor Dora has suffered dreadfully for some days from a swoln face, with Rheumatic cold—aggravated, if not caught, by last Sunday's Church. She is in bed. The rest of the family are well.'

DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

He adds a footnote with reference to a gift of Quillinan's to Dora,

'I like Dora's watch, and trust it keep the promise of its good looks.'

A fortnight later (February 18), Wordsworth and Dora jointly refer to the question of a school for Quillinan's second daughter Rotha:

'This letter might have been sent yesterday—through a frank—Dora tells me that it shall—I am glad of it, being quite ashamed to put you to the expense of mere letters of business—which I cannot make interesting by any sort of embroidery. Our life here is utterly unvaried, even in the Valentine season, when Miss H[utchinson] complained of being forgotten by you. Dora says you are a pretty man of your word having sent Rotha to Layholm Place. Those *daft* vanity fair people of Derbyshire, she thinks, have turned your head. They have had more weight and influence than our Philosopher and *all* his ladies[1]. . . . I wish I could see Dora looking better. [Here two and a half lines are obliterated, and a footnote in Dora's hand says: "Nonsense which Father had written about me and my looks, which I have taken the liberty of putting out."]'

On the 28th of April Wordsworth writes again, ending his business with the passage:

'How shall I make this letter worth postage? We are glad to hear of Rotha's recovery from the measles, and should rejoice also that Jemima had got well through the same complaint. My sister is well, but we think it necessary for her to keep to the invalid regimen and restrictions as to exposure and exercise. Miss Hutchinson is staying with the

[1] The last five words are in Dora's writing.

Southeys. Dora still with her brother at Moresby; she writes in high spirits, but we cannot hear that her looks and complexion are improved. . . . I am far more idle than you or anyone can be in London. My time is past chiefly among catchpenny publications of our Ambleside Book Society, and in overlooking two labourers whom I employ in draining part of the field behind Fillbrooke's Cottage, where we have just made a beautiful green terrace. Excuse this vile scrawl. Love from Mrs W. and my sister.

'Ever yours,
'W. W.'

To this Mrs Wordsworth adds:

'My dear Friend, be very cautious not to expose dear Rotha to cold winds. The chest is for a long time insceptible after that sickening disease, which I am thankful she has gotten so well thro'—wish sweet Mima had also taken it —but she may yet, and a favourable season is coming on. God bless both them and you, my dear Friend.

'M. W.'

The measles were not unduly serious; I forget whether the complaint attacked Jemima as well as Rotha. To come closer to the subject, we enter the summer of the year 1830, in which the album starts. In taking the signatures in order, we lose sight of Edward Quillinan for the time being.

THE STORY OF THE ALBUM

The matter that detains us now may seem,
To many, neither dignified enough
Nor arduous, yet will not be scorned by them,
Who, looking inward, have observed the ties
That bind the perishable hours of life
Each to the other, and the curious props
By which the world of memory and thought
Exists and is sustained.

The Prelude, VII. 458–465.

§ I. FELICIA HEMANS

THE SUMMER of 1830 was a season of unusual social gaiety at Rydal Mount. Discontent seems to have passed away from the family. Dorothy Wordsworth rallied from her mysterious nervous ailment; and Dora, though she returned unwell from a visit to Moresby, grew better as the summer went on. Whenever she was in her sprightly mood, the family was cheerful. Throughout our narrative Dora forms, in another sense of Mrs Wordsworth's phrase, a complete air-gauge for Rydal. At the time of her return the general liveliness was aided by the presence of various congenial guests; and of those who were there and who paid compliments to Wordsworth, Felicia Hemans took the liberty of choosing an unusual phrase.

Mrs Hemans, the incurably romantic and delightfully pretty idol of her day, appeared at Rydal Mount towards the end of June. The portrait in the National Portrait Gallery, and the miniature as frontispiece to Lady Ritchie's 'Blackstick Papers,' give indication of a charming face surrounded by dark glossy curls; bright eyes, a good complexion, lips that could either laugh or pout; 'with an air,' says Rossetti, 'of amiability and sprightly gentleness, and of confiding candour which, while none the less perfectly womanly, might also be termed childlike in its limpid depth....' There are many little tributes from contemporary pens. 'I might describe her for ever,' said Miss Jewsbury, 'and never should I succeed in portraying Egeria! She was a Muse, a Grace, a variable child, a dependent woman, the Italy of human beings....' The phrase, the 'idol of her day,' is not exaggerated. 'Editors wrote by every post for contributions from her pen, and

admirers trod on each other's heels, and packets of poetry arrived by every mail; also there came messages and compliments from America, where, if she would have consented to settle down, Felicia was offered a definite competence by a publishing firm.' The words are Lady Ritchie's, who reminds us that 'ladies held their own then, not by main force, but by divinest right.' Felicia Hemans nestled in the sentimental bosom of the age just preceding the accession of Victoria; she spontaneously rushed to verse as a discharge for tearful thoughts that had no very profound origin; she patiently developed her two main gifts, a sense of music and a sense of colour; but I suppose oblivion in due course will claim all but a fragment or two of her prolific work.

The phrase to which we referred above occurs in a letter she wrote from Rydal Mount, dated June 22, 1830. After describing her nervousness when the visit was in prospect, she goes on:

'I was driven to a lovely cottage-like building, almost hidden by a profusion of roses and ivy; and a most benignant-looking old man greeted me in the porch—this was Mr Wordsworth himself; and when I tell you that, having rather a large party of visitors in the house, he led me to a room apart from them, and brought in his family by degrees, I am sure that little trait will give you an idea of considerate kindness which you will both like and appreciate. In half an hour I felt myself as much at ease with him as I had been with Sir Walter Scott in half a day. I laughed to find myself saying on the occasion of some little domestic occurrence, "Mr Wordsworth, how *could* you be so giddy?"'

Few stranger compliments were ever paid to Words-

worth. The somewhat stern and serious old man we usually picture had received from his contemporaries many a shrewd knock, many a vapid phrase, and many fulsome adulations; but I think no friend or enemy, save perhaps his companion on the Rhone, had ever called him 'giddy.' We form a curious picture of the incident. Loughrigg Tarn, that little laughing face of water, looks up at the Langdale Pikes, and says, 'Oh Langdale Pikes, how *could* you be so giddy?' With all our modern talk of Wordsworth's rigidness and of his lack of humour, the phrase demands attention. It startles our set notions, as, we imagine, it startled Wordsworth. More observations follow in the same letter.

'He has, undeniably, a lurking love of mischief, and would not, I think, be half so safely entrusted with the tied-up bag of winds as Mr —— insisted that Dr Channing might be. There is almost a patriarchal simplicity, and an absence of all pretension, about him, which I know you would like; all is free, unstudied,—"The river winding at its own sweet will." In his manner and conversation there is more of impulse than I had expected, but in other respects I see much that I should look for in the poet of meditative life; frequently his head droops, and his eyes half close, and he seems buried in great depths of thought. I have passed a delightful morning to-day, in walking with him about his own richly shaded grounds, and hearing him speak of the old English writers, particularly Spenser, whom he loves, as he himself puts it, for his "earnestness and devotedness."'

The latter part of the picture is more familiar to us; but for the 'lurking love of mischief' and the conversational playfulness which could call forth the feminine epithet, we

are grateful to Mrs Hemans. It was not the least of many tributes to her beauty. There was, however, a slight reaction in his manner after a few days. Her impulsiveness and her romanticism called forth a reproof. Scott, though he was fond of Mrs Hemans and paid her several sincere compliments—taking trouble to aid the production of one of her plays—noted that she was 'somewhat too poetical for my taste; too many flowers and too little fruit.' But Scott said nothing to 'improve' her. Wordsworth took his duties as a host more seriously. He was aware that Mrs Hemans had been a precocious child, in the habit, at the age of six, of reading Shakespeare while seated in the branches of an apple-tree; and that, being clever and quick-witted, she had run into the dangerous habit of being a poetess rather than a woman. 'Her education,' says the Fenwick note in which Wordsworth, much later, dictates the improving incident, 'had been most unfortunate. She was totally ignorant of housewifery, and could as easily have managed the spear of Minerva as her needle. It was from observing these deficiencies, that, one day while she was under my roof, I *purposely* directed her attention to household economy, and told her I had purchased *Scales* which I intended to present to a young lady as a wedding present; pointed out their utility (for her especial benefit) and said that no ménage ought to be without them. Mrs Hemans, not in the least suspecting my drift, reported this saying, in a letter to a friend at the time, as a proof of my simplicity.'

It is hardly fair to break the quotation at this spot, for Wordsworth goes on to state honestly his 'affection for her amiable qualities,' and that 'there was much sympathy

between us.' I have no wish to bring the 'Scales' incident into undue prominence. It was, though characteristic, on the whole quite unimportant. It clung for fifteen years in Wordsworth's memory, perhaps as a surprising failure, but did not obliterate the recollection of a pleasant visit. As for Mrs Hemans, after her weeks at Rydal Mount she moved into a neighbouring cottage, Dove Nest, so as to prolong her stay at the Lakes. Her children there assembled, she did not leave for Wales until the middle of August. Her feelings about Rydal Mount were expressed by giving to Dora the little green album, and by writing in a small and pinny hand upon the first page:

'*To Rydal Mount.*

'Home of kind Voices and of loving eyes,
And Flowers, and Song!—thy Voices from the Earth
Must pass away, with all their Melodies,
And answering tones of Sadness or of Mirth;
Thy fond looks vanish, and thy treasured flowers
Yield up their spirits unto changeful hours.

'Not so thy Song! that like a glorious River,
With gentle Music in its deepest flow,
Freely and brightly winding on for ever,
While Thou art laid amidst thy Roses low,
Shall pour forth Gladness, and sweet Influence bear
Thro' blessed Homes like these—tho' none so fair.

'FELICIA HEMANS.

'Rydal Mount,
'*June*, 1830.'

The sight of a happy family bore a reflex wave of sadness over Mrs Hemans. The incompatible Captain Hemans had at that time stayed away for twelve years, and showed no

signs of returning. In the courageous way in which she buckled to the task of earning an education for her children by the proceeds of her verse, in the vivacious manner in which she bore the burdens of a very trying life, she reminds one of Mrs Trollope, and other ladies of a brave and romantic school. If sometimes the ringlets show behind the poems, she was only, after all, making use of what Montaigne called 'woman's true availful advantage.' She wore herself out with her labours, and died five years after her visit to Rydal Mount. In 1836, after her death, Wordsworth answered her stanzas with sorrow

> 'For her who ere her summer faded
> Has sunk into a breathless sleep.'

§ 2. TWO EDUCATORS

Mrs Hemans was still staying with her children at the Lakes when William Rowan Hamilton and his sister Eliza came to spend three weeks with the Wordsworths. Hamilton's first visit to Wordsworth was made in 1827, when he was twenty-two, but even then a full Professor of Astronomy. His was a very brilliant and somewhat susceptible youth; Wordsworth had liked him much, and, with a good deal of sympathy, helped the boy over the despondency of an unsuccessful love affair. It was due to Hamilton's suggestion that Wordsworth visited Ireland in 1829; and Eliza describes an incident of that tour in pretty fashion. Wordsworth stayed at the Observatory, Dunsink; and, Hamilton having challenged the poet's treatment of science, Wordsworth proceeded to read long passages of *The Excur-*

sion aloud in the drawing-room. The girls, Eliza and her sister, came in modestly, not daring to interrupt. 'I felt,' says Eliza, 'a tear gathering in my eye as I looked at him, and at that moment, I cannot exactly define why, he seemed to me *sublime*....' Hamilton had prepared his sisters carefully beforehand by impressing upon them the greatness of his friend. There is a boyish egotistical exultation about a letter from him to Eliza during his first visit to the Lakes. Wordsworth had walked with him; 'he and I were taking a *midnight walk* together for a long, long time, *without any companion* except the stars and our own burning thoughts and words.' The italics are his own.

Later on Hamilton paid more attention to the stars, and less to his own 'burning thoughts and words'; but at this time both he and his sister were fond of versification. Wordsworth had given them advice, eminently sensible and generally depreciatory, and they were both excited at the thought of seeing him again in 1830. They met Mrs Hemans, whom afterwards they grew to know more intimately in Ireland; and they wrote enthusiastically and at length in Dora's album.

Hamilton visited Wordsworth in 1838, and again in the summer of 1844. During this last stay they went for a walk with Professor Butler and other friends to Loughrigg Tarn, a place of many memories for Wordsworth, then seventy-four. Knight quotes Woodward's *Memoir of Archer Butler* for an account of the day.

'The splendour of a July noon surrounded us and lit up the landscape, with the Langdale Pikes soaring above, and the bright tarn shining beneath; and when the poet's eyes

were satisfied with their feast on the beauties familiar to them, they sought relief in the search, to them a happy vital habit, for new beauty in the flower-enamelled turf at his feet. There his attention was arrested by a fair smooth stone, of the size of an ostrich's egg, seeming to imbed at its centre, and at the same time to display, a dark star-shaped fossil of most distinct outline. Upon closer examination this proved to be the shadow of a daisy projected upon it with extraordinary precision by the intense light of an almost vertical sun. The poet drew the attention of the rest of the party to the minute but beautiful phenomenon, and gave expression at the time to thoughts suggested by it, which so interested our friend Professor Butler, that he plucked the tiny flower, and, saying that "it should be not only the theme but the memorial of the thought they had heard," bestowed it somewhere carefully for preservation.'

The resulting poem was:

'So fair, so sweet, withal so sensitive;
Would that the little flowers were born to live
Conscious of half the pleasure which they give,
That to this mountain daisy's self were known,
The beauty of its star-shaped shadow thrown
On the smooth surface of this naked stone. . . .'

Ruskin particularly admired the 'good downright foreground painting, no mistake about it; drawing and shadow and stone texture and all. Our painters,' he adds, 'must come to this before they have done their duty.'

At the conclusion of this visit Hamilton wrote a second time in Dora's album. Both entries are recorded at full length in Graves's *Life of Hamilton*, and there is no need

for repetition here. A line in the later contribution in which Hamilton speaks

'Of many an earnest, many a playful talk,'

indicates, with what we have already mentioned, the nature of the visits of the first of the two educators who appear at the beginning of Dora's book.

The other, Dr Andrew Bell, was of very different character. Hamilton was a research worker, chiefly notable in the history of science for such contributions as the theory of Quaternions. He was an educator in the sense of a lecturer on abstruse and advanced problems. Dr Bell made no such lasting contributions to the stock of knowledge. He sprang to fame in his own day by the indomitable pursuit of a very simple idea, less original than he supposed; and he is remarkable in history more as a quaint and not altogether enviable person, than for the idea which he thought would revolutionize the practice of teaching. An educator in the sense of a reformer of elementary schools, and interesting by virtue of remarkable strength of purpose.

In Professor Meiklejohn's biography the story is engagingly told. Andrew Bell was born in St Andrews in 1753, his father a wig-maker with an appetite and mouth 'of remarkable and well-known capacity.' These qualities Bell inherited, together with a keen, strong mind. He achieved considerable success at the University. Seeing no prospect of adequate pay at St Andrews, he went to Virginia, and after a stay there, in which he dabbled in tobacco and the exchange as well as teaching, brought two pupils back

with him to London. Finding them of expensive tastes, he resigned their charge and returned by road to Scotland. He kept a journal *en route*; mentions that at Grantham he 'supped at the Angel with an Israelite'; that he was continually losing things upon the way—'on the first day my penknife, on the second a handkerchief, on the third a nightcap, on the fourth my glass.' When he reached Scotland he objected, like Dr Johnson, to the smells. At Fallowden he had good green tea at breakfast, which cost sixpence; 'at Greenlaw it was eightpence.' Finally, he 'arrived in the dark at St Andrews, and was not known by mamma.'

So ended the first stage of his adventures. His stay in St Andrews was not altogether devoid of excitement. He was made a Doctor by his University, and had a duel with an English student, which ended amusingly because Bell was short-sighted and fired into the seconds by mistake. But his hot temper was always reconciled by thoughts of food, and in his chronicle there is more of feasts than quarrels. Typical is the account of a notable Christmas spread, with some remarks on heavy eating and profound joy at 'Three wines: bravo!' The period was one of hard work as well as pleasure. Bell rose habitually at four, and when his London pupils came north for metaphysics he tried to make them start their days at five. But there seemed no more real prospects of advancement at St Andrews than he had seen before; so, in 1787, the Doctor sailed for India with £128. 10*s.* in pocket.

His objective in India had been Calcutta, but on the way he seized the opportunity of taking charge of a Military

Male Orphan Asylum at Madras. There he was indefatigable, both in and out of the asylum. Between August and October of the year of his arrival he obtained, besides his definite charge, one chaplainship, three deputy-chaplainships, and delivered as well a course of public lectures. These became the fashionable rage of the ladies of Madras; as someone wrote about the course, 'the ladies are determined to encounter every inconvenience for fashion's sake.' Bell was completely happy. Within a year and a half he held eight sinecures; was everywhere at once; and when he returned, in 1796, his balance put his previous account to shame. It was £25,935. 16*s.* 5*d.*

By no means was this all. In India he had found his one idea; and he returned prepared to tackle and conquer England by means of his 'Report on the Madras Asylum.' The scheme he had in mind was a pupil-teacher, or mutual-tuition, system which he hoped to introduce in every school from Land's End to John o' Groats. The Report, he was convinced, would alter and ameliorate all troubles of elementary instruction; and, about 1797, he writes to the printer: 'You will mark me for an enthusiast; but if you and I live a thousand years, we shall see this system of education spread over the world.' Copies of the Report were sent to all the peers of the realm, and Bell travelled up and down the country-side inspecting, urging changes, exhorting everybody to adhere and trust to the new panacea.

As an investment, he bought a house and land at Dumfries. His friends suspected some ulterior motive. 'It is,' wrote one, 'the general opinion of all my female friends, that you could only hire so dear a house, and keep a carriage,

with a view to fascinate some coy damsel.' As a matter of fact, the susceptible Doctor was amenable to these suggestions. He had long had the expressed desire for what he thought 'the only solid comfort of life—a union with an amiable and sweet partner.' He therefore married, at the age of forty-seven, a Miss Agnes Barclay. It was an unfortunate experiment. They separated after six years of misalliance. The Doctor's 'somewhat combustible disposition,' says Meiklejohn, may have been partly to blame; but De Quincey blames the lady. 'This legal separation,' says the author, in a note to *Reminiscences of the Lake Poets*, 'did not prevent the lady from presenting the unhappy doctor with everlasting letters, indorsed outside with records of her enmity and spite. Sometimes she addressed her epistles thus: "To that supreme of rogues, who looks like the hangdog that he is, Doctor (such a Doctor!) Andrew Bell." Or, again: "To the ape of apes, and the knave of knaves, who is recorded to have once paid a debt, but a small one you may be sure it was that he selected for this wonderful experiment—in fact, it was $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ Had it been the other side of 6*d.* he must have died before he could have achieved so dreadful a sacrifice." Many others, most ingeniously varied in the style of abuse, I have heard rehearsed by Coleridge, Southey, Lloyd, etc.; and one, in particular, addressed to the Doctor, when spending the summer in the cottage of Robert Newton, an old soldier, in Grasmere, presented on the back two separate adjurations, one specially addressed to Robert himself, pathetically urging him to look sharply after the rent of his lodgings; and the other more generally addressed to the unfortunate person as yet

undisclosed to the British public (and in this case turning out to be myself), who might be incautious enough to pay the postage at Ambleside. "Don't grant him an hour's credit," she urged upon the person unknown, "if I had any regard to my family." "*Cash down*," she wrote, twice over. Why the Doctor submitted to these annoyances, nobody knew. Some said it was mere indolence; but others held it to be a cunning compromise with her inexorable malice. The letters were certainly open to the "public" eye; but meantime the "public" was a very narrow one; the clerks in the post office had little time for digesting such amenities of conjugal affection, and the chance bearer of the letters to the Doctor would naturally solve the mystery by supposing an *extra* portion of madness in the writer, rather than an *extra* portion of knavery in the reverend receiver.'

The unhappy experiment over, Bell remained for the rest of his life wedded to his System. With wonderful energy and hot haste he travelled and laboured to convince all he met. There was no limit to his versatility and range of argument, though in the latter a friend advised him not to talk so loud. He held various livings and advertised the System in all. 'Benefit societies, schools, friendly meetings, clubs, visiting from house to house, advising with farmers, —nothing came amiss to him; his large, fiery, friendly nature had an infection in it which few could resist.' He redoubled all earlier efforts, became a fanatic in the cause. 'He could think of nothing else; he spoke of nothing else; he wrote about nothing else. He was devoured by this single aim; he had become in every respect a one-ideaed man. Everything, both external and internal—every trait

in the character or minds of other men—was submitted to the standard of the *System* and approved or condemned by that.' He called it the Novum Organum of education. He preached about it without end. At Hereford he delivered a sermon after keeping an amanuensis busy night and day copying his verbose and involved sentences. He preached for an hour, then took off his spectacles to wipe them. The congregation, thinking he had done, rose up to leave. Instantly the Doctor shouted, 'God bless my soul!' clapped on his spectacles once more, and began again.

He became a little trying to his friends. Many were convinced. Mr Justice Park wrote that Bell's 'plan is one of the most stupendous engines that have ever been wielded, since the days of our Saviour and His apostles, for the advancement of God's true religion upon earth.' Southey admired him heartily, calling the System 'the most important invention for the diffusion of knowledge that has ever been made since printing was discovered.' Southey also named Bell 'the best of all good men,' and Coleridge called him a great man to his face. Bell was not dismayed. He urged the System upon Wordsworth, and the latter was enthusiastic for a time. In a note to *The Excursion* (IX. 299), where the Wanderer speaks of the State 'binding herself by statute to secure' the rudiments of letters 'for all the children whom her soil maintains,' Wordsworth says:

'The discovery of Dr Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to overrate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.'

In writing to Thomas Poole in 1815, Wordsworth echoed Southey's words:

'Next to the art of printing it is the noblest invention for the improvement of the human species.'

Later this enthusiasm cooled, and we have the reaction:

'Even as a course of tuition, I have strong objections to infant schools, and in no small degree to the Madras System also.'

But for the moment, at any rate, Wordsworth was talked over; and the kindly-hearted Dorothy was a willing victim when Bell asked for her aid. He wrote abominably, and conferred with her as to how the Report might be improved. She laboured, studied, remodelled, and even rewrote the whole; but in the end it came to nothing. The Doctor had a villainous habit of getting people to do work for him and then discarding it; and he threw Dorothy's manuscript aside for its lack of ponderosity.

In 1830 Bell was a cantankerous old man of seventy-seven. He then fixed his residence at Cheltenham, and never again left it. He had severe troubles of his own. His voice and throat were affected; and his breathing, through slow hardening of the wind-pipe, was impeded. But he still clung desperately to his one idea. He was very anxious about his works, both the existing and the proposed posthumous editions. Among other plans he formed one of a complete edition of everything he had written to be edited by Southey and Wordsworth. Mrs Wordsworth went to Cheltenham to see him about this scheme. She found the Doctor both ill and irritable; full of tremulous anxiety about

the disposal of his property and his 'ideas'; and she did not have an easy or an altogether pleasant visit. It has called for mention here, however, because (I judge) she took with her to Cheltenham the little green album. In it is written:

'If you and I live a thousand years, we shall see this System over the world. A. BELL.'

The penmanship is shaky and very feeble, the entry a thin but determined recapitulation of the enthusiastic boast made to the printer more than thirty years before. The thousand years has not yet expired, and there may still be hope for Dr Bell. But at the present moment the 'Madras System' is so thoroughly dead, if one may use the phrase, that it is only brought to memory by the character of its proposer.

§ 3. CAT'S EDEN

Southey's entry in the album follows immediately after that of Andrew Bell, and is as follows:

'This is a little Book; the less,
The better it must be.
(Dear Dora, what I think of it,
I fairly say to thee.)
A smaller, or a prettier Book
I would not wish to see:...
I only wish it had been full
Before it came to me.

'ROBERT SOUTHEY.

'Cat's Eden, 1 *Oct.* 1830.'

This is a little Book: the Less
The better it must be.
(Dear Dora, what I think of it,
I fairly say to thee.)
A smaller, or a prettier Book
I would not wish to see:
I only wish it had been full
Before it came to me.

Robert Southey.

Lodore Ben. 1 Oct. 1830.

Cat's Eden, where the verses were signed, I take to be Southey's study. His love of the room and his industry there are proverbial. 'Imagine me,' he wrote, 'in this great study of mine from breakfast till dinner, from dinner till tea, and from tea till supper, in my old black coat, my corduroys alternately with the long worsted pantaloons and gaiters in one, and the green shade, and sitting at my desk, and you have my picture and my history.' But he was not always alone at his work. He was very fond of cats and kittens, and it may have been Rumpel, as a kitten, who assisted him to compose the entry for Dora. Rumpel was a great favourite: unfortunately he died about 1834. 'Alas, Grosvenor,' mourns Southey in a letter, 'this day poor old Rumpel was found dead, after as long and happy a life as a cat could wish for, if cats form wishes on that subject. His full title was:—"The Most Noble the Archduke Rumpelstiltzchen, Earl Tomlemagne, Baron Raticide, Waowhler, and Skeratch." There should be a court mourning in Catland.... As we have no catacombs here, he is to be decently interred in the orchard, and cat-mint planted on his grave.'

Skipping now two intervening contributions, a pen sketch after Rembrandt by M. Dickinson, and a poem, *The Nun*, by Edward Northcoat Archer, we come to the following:

'*The Sleeping Forest Child.*

'From a painting by R. Rothwell, Esq.

'The morn is waking in the woods,
The birds are glancing by,

And these are flowers where late were buds,
Young sleeper, ope thine eye!
The dark tree tops wave gallantly
Against a pearly sky,
Their leaves are twinkling pleasantly,
Young sleeper, ope thine eye!

'The dews are drying fast away,
(Those diamonds of the dawn),
From covert now for food or play
Steals forth the dark-eyed fawn;
The bee is gone forth murmuringly,
The rill flows through the lawn,
In silver-sounding revelry,
—O why is thine withdrawn?

'Thy laugh would drown the streamlet's voice,
Thy step outspeed its bound,
Thy glee, a thing of heart and choice,
Would scatter glee around;
I know there's music in the sky,
Bright blossoms on the ground,
Yet, yet, young sleeper, ope thine eye,
For more in thee is found.

'Thy cheek is glowing on the grass
With deep exotic bloom,
And thou might'st seem to all that pass
Through the green forest gloom,
A sunbeam stolen from on high,
And by a summer doom
Made in a human form to lie,
There, in that fragrant tomb.

'Yet ope thine eye, and be a thing
Of life not yet beguiled,

Sweeter than poetry may sing,
—An infant undefiled!
Awake, and let me wreathe thine hair,
Wildflower, with flowers as wild,
Be to the bosom old with care
A simple, happy child.

'M. J. JEWSBURY.

'*November* 5, 1830.'

The verses come under the present heading because the author tried to make Rydal Mount a happy hunting ground for adventurous cats. She gave to Wordsworth some goldfish, and a pair of doves to Dora. Both gifts are noted by Wordsworth in verse. The fish were kept for some time in a bowl in the morning-room, but did not thrive there; they were removed to 'Dora's Field'; and in the Fenwick note to *Liberty* Wordsworth adds some details. 'One of them being all but dead, they were taken to the pool under the old pollard oak. The apparently dying one lay on its side, unable to move. I used to watch it, and about the tenth day it began to right itself, and in a few days more was able to swim about with its companions. For many months they continued to prosper in this new place of abode, but one night, by an unusually great flood, they were swept out of the pool, and perished, to our great regret.'

The doves, more immediate desire of the cats, were in an osier cage, usually hung in a laburnum in the garden glades. Though one died, the other survived for 'many years,' and, as indicated in the note to *The Poet and the Caged Turtledove*, 'it was the habit of the bird to begin cooing and murmuring whenever it heard me making my verses.' But eventually fate overtook it. It 'was killed, to

our great sorrow, by a neighbour's cat that got in at the window and dragged it partly out of the cage.' I am not sure whether the cat was Rumpel, come across country to avenge some slight upon his master's books by Wordsworth's careless hands. Southey, though he was good-humoured on the subject, used to lament with a smile that to 'introduce Wordsworth into one's library, is like letting a bear into a tulip garden'; and if Rumpel was all that Southey says about him, Wordsworth must have seemed to the four-legged animal an intruder in Cat's Eden, a 'mere monster' (De Quincey's phrase) who had no interest in Catland, and who was unfriendly to its lazy peace.

Wordsworth's attitude to animals is interesting. He brought his unresting inquiry to bear upon them, willing enough to glean thoughts serious and in the deep sense scientific, but succumbing rarely to the relaxation of playfulness. Wordsworth had none of the instincts that make for pets. 'Of all the men I ever knew,' Coleridge is reported to have said, 'Wordsworth has the least femineity in his mind. He is *all man*. He is a man of whom it might have been said, "It is good for him to be alone!"' Canon Rawnsley questioned some dalesmen on this point. 'Wudsworth was no dog-fancier,' answered one who had been a servant of the poet, 'and as for cats, he couldn't abide them; and he didn't care for sheep, or horses, a deal, but if he was fond of onything it was of *li'le ponies*. He was a man of fancies, ye kna. It was a fancy of his. He was fond of li'le ponies.' It is a remark to be remembered later in connection with the pony Naso.

Miss Jewsbury was a friend of some years' standing. In

the *Literary Magnet* for 1826 she had published a poem on *The Poet's Home*, descriptive of Rydal Mount. This part refers to Dora and her father:

> 'Then a second form beyond
> Thine too, by another bond,
> Sportive, tender, graceful, wild,
> Scarcely woman, more than child,
> One who doth thy heart entwine
> Like the ever-clinging vine;
> One to whom thou art a stay,
> As the oak that, scarred and grey,
> Standeth on, and standeth fast,
> Strong and stately to the last.'

It was during that visit, perhaps, that Miss Jewsbury told Wordsworth about the pleasure she once had in looking at a stuffed owl during illness. This suggested the sonnet *While Anna's peers and early playmates tread*—Anna standing for Miss Jewsbury. The poem *Liberty*, in which the goldfish are referred to, was addressed to Miss Jewsbury, but never reached her in print. She married and went to India with her husband before it came out, and there died of cholera.

§ 4. COLERIDGE AT HIGHGATE

The Wordsworths came to London for the winter of 1830–31, with a stop on the way at Cambridge. The album came with them. I think the first London entry is the one written by the infirm hand of Coleridge at Highgate, on Christmas Eve.

'Inscription on
a
Time-piece

'Now! It is gone.—Our moments travel post,
Each with it's deed or thought, it's *What?* and how?
But, know! each parting Hour gives up a Ghost,
May live within thee, an eternal NOW.

'S. T. COLERIDGE.

'24 *Decr.* 1830.'

The verses are printed in Moxon's 1854 edition of Coleridge's works, with certain textual changes.

I do not know whether there was any particular reason for Coleridge's choosing the 'inscription' for Dora's album. It is brief, and at this time he did not write easily. Many of those who wrote in Dora's book did so eagerly, spontaneously, dipping the pen with only verbal protestation. Coleridge was no longer of that type. The 'What' came only with an effort. His health was below his poor average at this time. Hamilton had been anxious to meet him; to the astronomer Wordsworth writes in January: 'You are interested about Mr Coleridge; I saw him several times lately, and have had long conversations with him. It grieves me to say that his constitution seems much broken up. I have heard that he has been worse since I saw him. His mind has lost none of its vigour, but he is certainly in that state of bodily health that no one who knows him could feel justified in holding out the hope of even an introduction to him, as an inducement for your visiting London.' Coleridge was not in a position to do favours. He could not, of course, refuse Wordsworth and Dora. By himself he

Inscription on a Time-piece

Now! It is gone. Our Moments
travel post,
Each with th' deed or thought, th'
what, and how!
But, know! each parting Hour gives
up a Ghost,
May live within Thee, an Eternal NOW.

S. T. Coleridge

24 Decr 1830.

could rarely refuse anybody. We have it in Wordsworth's words that 'of all men whom I have ever known, Coleridge had the most of passive courage in bodily peril, but no one was so easily cowed when moral firmness was required in miscellaneous conversation or in the daily intercourse of social life[1].'

There is no doubt he enjoyed the long conversations with Wordsworth, though it is not likely they were of a retrospective character. For Coleridge to look back on his life was to pursue a long regressus of pain and conflict; to quote a sequence of stanzas with burden always the same:

'Lingering he raised his latch at eve,
Though tired in heart and limb;
He loved no other place, and yet
Home was no home to him.'

He preferred to dream about eternal things. As far as physical details go, his surroundings at this time were not unpleasant. He had found friends, the Gillmans, who would exchange a local habitation for his name. The description given by Leigh Hunt is attractive enough:

'His room looked upon a delicious prospect of wood and meadow, with coloured gardens under the window, like an embroidery to the mantle. I thought, when I first saw it, that he had taken up his dwelling-place like an abbot. Here he cultivated his flowers, and had a set of birds for

[1] Hamilton, by the way, managed to see Coleridge, in spite of Wordsworth's message. Of his visit the scientist records:

'Coleridge is rather to be considered as a Faculty than as a Mind; and I did so consider him. I seemed rather to listen to an oracular voice, to be circumfused in a Divine than—as in the presence of Wordsworth—to hold commune with an exalted man.'

his pensioners, who came to breakfast with him. He might have been seen taking his daily stroll up and down, with his black coat and white locks, and a book in his hand; and was a great acquaintance of the little children. His main occupation, I believe, was reading. He loved to read old folios, and to make old voyages with Purchas and Marco Polo; the seas being in good visionary condition, and the vessel well stocked with botargoes.'

Coleridge's reading was enormous, but not his main occupation. That was still conversation; in which, De Quincey notes, 'as a *bravura* artist,' no one ever surpassed him. Gillman records that Lamb said of Coleridge, 'his talk is as fine as an angel's.' As Mr E. V. Lucas adds, Lamb was not always so reverent. 'Many writers tell the story, now a commonplace, of his reply to Coleridge's question, "Charles, did you ever hear me preach?"—"I never heard you do anything else."' And we should also recall Lamb's good-natured fantasy, related by John Dix, and quoted in Mr Lucas's *Life of Lamb*. One day on his way to the city, said Lamb, he met Coleridge 'brimful of some new idea, and in spite of my assuring him that time was precious, he drew me within the door of an unoccupied garden by the road-side, and there, sheltered from observation by a hedge of evergreens, he took me by the button of my coat, and closing his eyes commenced an eloquent discourse, waving his right hand gently, as the musical words flowed in an unbroken stream from his lips. I listened entranced; but the striking of a church-clock recalled me to a sense of duty. I saw it was of no use to attempt to break away, so taking advantage of his absorption in his subject, I, with my penknife, quietly severed the

button from my coat, and decamped. Five hours afterwards, in passing the same garden, on my way home, I heard Coleridge's voice, and on looking in, there he was, with closed eyes,—the button in his fingers—, and his right hand gracefully waving, just as when I left him. He had never missed me!'

In 1834 Coleridge died. He had been 'proof and touchstone' in the measure we have seen to Wordsworth, and the latter felt the loss a heavy one. None had received more from Coleridge as a young man than Wordsworth; but the separation about 1810 was unfortunate, and the ground lost was never wholly recovered. At the end, Coleridge was closer to Lamb. He did not die in actual want. As Mr Birrell well remarked, no friend of Charles Lamb's ever did. More important than the material circumstances of his death, his last days were relieved by the consciousness that he was nearing the end of his lifelong struggle. Many have written of Coleridge and his infirmity, of his faults and failings after he began to take opium and 'for ever renounced poetry for metaphysics'; many have followed him to Malta and to Bristol, 'through quarrels and patchings-up of friendship, through wanderings, returns, vows and defections, partial recoveries, relapses and despairs, to the long-drawn sunset of his life in the home of the Gillmans at Highgate.' Of his warfare with opium, Coleridge himself wrote:

'My conscience indeed bears me witness, that from the time I quitted Cambridge, no human being was more indifferent to the pleasures of the table than myself, or less needed any stimulation to my spirits; and that by a most

unhappy quackery, after having been almost bedrid for six months with swollen knees and other distressing symptoms of disordered digestive functions, and through that most pernicious form of ignorance, medical half-knowledge, I was seduced into the use of narcotics, not secretly, but (such was my ignorance) openly and exultingly, as one who had discovered, and was never weary of recommending, a grand panacea, and saw not the truth till my body had contracted a habit and a necessity; and that, even to the latest, my responsibility is for cowardice and defect of fortitude, not for the least craving after gratification or pleasurable sensation of any sort, but for yielding to pain, terror, and haunting bewilderment. But this I say to man only, who knows only what has been yielded, not what has been resisted; before God I have but one voice—"Mercy! mercy! woe is me."'

That was in 1820; the letter, to his medical adviser, ends as follows:

'Pray for me, my dear friend, that I may not pass such another night as the last. While I am awake and retain my reasoning powers, the pang is gnawing, but I am, except for a fitful moment or two, tranquil; it is the howling wilderness of sleep that I dread.'

That he came at length through the black passages, that he emerged at the end with the drug at bay, is tribute to a greater moral firmness than Wordsworth counted on. None knew better than Wordsworth what had been yielded, but it was hard for him to see what had been resisted. De Quincey is a better witness; his final estimate, when he himself had passed through the same struggle, should be read more often than the earlier *Reminiscences*:

'Coleridge has been dead for more than fifteen years, and he lived through a painful life of sixty-three years; seventy-eight years it is since he first drew that troubled air of earth, from which with such bitter loathing he rose as a phoenix might be supposed to rise, that, in retribution of some treason to his immortal race, had been compelled for a secular period to banquet on carrion with ghouls, or on the spoils of *vivisection* with vampires. Not with less horror of retrospect than such a phoenix did Coleridge, when ready to wing his flight from earth, survey the chambers of suffering through which he had trod his way from childhood to gray hairs. Perhaps amongst all the populous nations of the grave not one was ever laid there, through whose bones so mighty a thrill of shuddering anguish would creep, if by an audible whisper the sound of earth and the memories of earth could reach his coffin. Yet why? Was he not himself a child of earth? Yes, and by too strong a link: *that* it was which shattered him. For also he was a child of Paradise, and in the struggle between two natures he could not support himself erect. That dreadful conflict it was which supplanted his footing. Had he been gross, fleshly, sensual, being so framed for voluptuous enjoyment, he would have sunk away silently (as millions sink) through carnal wrecks into carnal ruin. He would have been mentioned oftentimes with a sigh of regret as that youthful author who had enriched the literature of his country with two exquisite poems, "Love" and the "Ancient Mariner," but who for some unknown reason had not fulfilled his apparent mission on earth. As it was, being most genial and by his physical impulses most luxurious; yet, on the other hand, by fiery aspirations of intellect and of spiritual heart being coerced as if through torments of magical spells into rising heavenwards for ever, into eternal commerce with the grander regions of his own

nature, he found this strife too much for his daily peace, too imperfect was the ally which he found in his will; treachery there was in his own nature, and almost by a necessity he yielded to the dark temptations of opium. That "graspless hand," from which, as already in one of his early poems (November, 1794) he had complained—

"Drop friendship's priceless pearls as hour-glass sands,"

was made much *more* graspless, and in this way the very graces of his moral nature ministered eventually to the heaviest of his curses. Most unworldly he was, most unmercenary, and (as somebody has remarked) even to a disease, and, in such a degree as if an organ had been forgotten by Nature in his composition, disregardful of self. But even in these qualities lay the baits for his worldly ruin, which subsequently caused or allowed so much of his misery. Partly from the introversion of his mind, and its habitual sleep of reverie in relation to all external interests, partly from his defect in all habits of prudential forecasting, resting his head always on the pillow of the *present*—he had been carried rapidly past all openings that offered towards the creation of a fortune before he even heard of them, and he first awoke to the knowledge that such openings had ever existed when he looked back upon them from a distance, and found them already irrevocable for ever.'

Closest of all friends at the end was Lamb; and of all, most likely to know the nature and the spirit of his 'archangel a little damaged.' Three months after Coleridge died, Lamb described his own feelings:

'When I heard of the death of Coleridge, it was without grief. It seemed to me that he had long been on the confines of the next world,—that he had a hunger for eternity. I grieved then that I could not grieve. But since, I feel

how great a part he was of me. His great and dear spirit haunts me. I cannot think a thought, I cannot make a criticism on men and books, without an ineffectual turning and reference to him. He was the proof and touchstone of all my cogitations. He was a Grecian (or in the first form) at Christ's Hospital, where I was deputy-Grecian; and the same subordination and deference to him I have preserved through a life-long acquaintance. Great in his writings, he was greatest in his conversation. In him was disproved that old maxim, that we should allow every one his share of talk. He would talk from morn to dewy eve, nor cease till far midnight; yet who ever would interrupt him—who would obstruct that continuous flow of converse, fetched from Helicon or Zion? He had the tact of making the unintelligible seem plain. Many who read the abstruser parts of his "Friend" would complain that his words did not answer to his spoken wisdom. They were identical. But he had a tone in oral delivery which seemed to convey sense to those who were otherwise imperfect recipients. He was my fifty-years-old friend without a dissension. Never saw I his likeness, nor probably the world can see again. I seem to love the house he died at more passionately than when he lived. I love the faithful Gilmans more than while they exercised their virtues towards him living. What was his mansion is consecrated to me a chapel.'

Lamb went to Highgate shortly after the funeral, to see the Gillmans. 'There,' says Talfourd, 'he asked leave to see the nurse who had attended upon Coleridge; and being struck and affected by the feeling she manifested towards his friend, insisted on her receiving five guineas from him,—a gratuity which seemed almost incomprehensible to the poor woman, but which Lamb could not help giving as an

immediate expression of his own gratitude. From her he learned the effort by which Coleridge had suppressed the expression of his sufferings, and the discovery affected him even more than the news of his death.'

§ 5. HAMPSTEAD AND ST JAMES'S

On the left-hand page facing Coleridge's entry is Crabbe's contribution, undated, but probably a little later. The verses, like those of Coleridge, were from memory rather than composed for the occasion. The entry reads:

'Beside the Summer-Sea I stand,
Where the slow Billows swelling shine,
How beautiful this pearly Sand,
Be this delicious Quiet mine:

'Beneath this Cliff my sheltered Seat,
To watch th' intangled Weeds ashore,
To hear the rimpling Waters beat
And dream as I have dreamt before.

'GEO. CRABBE.'

Wordsworth's account of Crabbe, as dictated to Miss Fenwick, is as follows:

'Crabbe I have met in London at Mr Rogers', but more frequently and favourably at Mr Hoare's upon Hampstead Heath. Every spring he used to pay that family a visit of some length.... Crabbe obviously for the most part preferred the company of women to that of men, for this among other reasons; that he did not like to be put upon the stretch in general conversation: accordingly in miscellaneous society his talk was so much below what might have been expected from a man so deservedly celebrated,

that to me it seemed trifling. It must upon other occasions have been of a different character, as I found in our rambles together on Hampstead Heath, and not so much from a readiness to communicate his knowledge of life and manners as of natural history in all its branches. His mind was inquisitive, and he seems to have taken refuge from the remembrance of the distresses he had gone through, in these studies and the employments to which they led. Moreover, such contemplations might tend profitably to counterbalance the painful truths which he had collected from his intercourse with mankind. Had I been more intimate with him, I should have ventured to touch upon his office as a minister of the Gospel, and how far his heart and soul were in it so as to make him a zealous and diligent labourer: in poetry, though he wrote much as we all know, he assuredly was not so....'

Leaving aside the extraneous gossip and questioning, this note strikes truly to the core of Crabbe's old age. 'He seems to have taken refuge from the remembrance of the distresses he had gone through' in just such pictures as that of his verses above. Slaughden Quay and the butter barrels that he loathed were long behind him; the pleasure in the sea, and in the 'contracted flora' he had studied carefully, remained. Though as a young man he had hated Aldeburgh with a shrewd and penetrating hate, as an old man in memory he had an inward longing till the last for the shingled beach,

> 'With all those bright red pebbles, that the sun
> Through the small waves so softly shines upon....'

Crabbe died about a year after this entry, at the age of seventy-eight.

The next entry is Wordsworth's sonnet beginning *Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room*, copied in by Joanna Baillie at Hampstead, on December 27. The album seems to have lain dormant after this till March, Wordsworth being away for part of the intervening time at Buxted Rectory, in Sussex. Then R. P. Gillies, a writer 'of versatility and talent, but generally in a hopeless condition of insolvency,' as Mr Nowell Smith characterizes him, opened the series of spring contributions with a *Quatuorzain addressed to Will^m. Wordsworth Esq^re. referring to a sonnet written by him at Edin^g. in* 1814. The sonnet had been an attempt to free Gillies from the 'dark chambers of dejection' by proving that:

> 'A cheerful life is what the Muses love,
> A soaring spirit is their prime delight.'

Gillies's replying verses read:

'Wordsworth! Since first in scenes now far remote,
Thy varied eloquence 'twas mine to hear,
Long years have worn away, and Time has wrought
Sad change for one whose humble path to cheer,
Thy voice was kindly raised. But still in thought,
Those distant scenes their wonted aspect wear,
With bright autumnal hues to Memory brought,
And not the less (though in how different sphere!)
I welcome thee,—rejoicing that by Time
Not all are doom'd to change,—that even this life
Gains vernal freshness from thine Art sublime,—
And mid the crowded haunts of worldly strife,
Calmly the Poet's mind sustains its flame,—
Like stars through clouds,—unyielding and the same!

'R. P. GILLIES.

'London, *March* 8, 1831.'

Next comes the ever-hospitable Rogers; to follow Rannie's description, a sympathetic, wealthy, ornate, caustic little man, with bald head and wrinkled face, cadaverous in its paleness; blue eyes which Carlyle called both 'sorrowful' and 'cruel'; withal a kindness that has made him famous as a host. Rogers had met Wordsworth at Grasmere in 1803, and the friendship kept up, by visits and correspondence, for nearly half a century. Wordsworth notes, in a letter to Professor Reed, that in his visit to London in 1845 he saw more of Rogers, then in his eighty-third year, than of anyone else, save his host, Moxon. Whenever in town Wordsworth was a frequent guest at St James's Place; and we may assume the following was signed there:

'Her voice, whate'er she said, enchanted;
Like music to the heart it went.
And her dark eyes—how eloquent;
Ask what they would, 't was granted.

'SAML. ROGERS.
'*April* 5, 1831.'

I turn back now a few pages for an entry on a left-hand page, unsigned and misdated. It reads:

'Where Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge write,
With wisdom, humour, pathos,
Where Rogers, Crabbe, with fancies bright
This favoured book arrāy thus,
How can you bid a nameless Wight
His dogg'rel to displāy thus?—
How can you ask the glow-worm's light
To glimmer in mid-dāy thus?—

Did ever Mole with all his might
Rear hills to rival Athos?—
Yet thus for You, in reason's spite,
I perpetrate the bathos.'

This is dated March 21, 1831, and incorrectly so. It must have been later—it mentions Rogers's entry—though probably in the same year. The desirability of placing it comes with the suspicion that the 'nameless Wight' is Edward Quillinan. By all the laws of human nature Dora saw Quillinan in London; and we know from one of her letters to Christopher Wordsworth that her father and Quillinan went for a visit at this time to 'a raving admirer' at Brixton Hill. She also intimates that Wordsworth talked much with Quillinan about the Reform Bill, which exercised him greatly. The handwriting confirms the suspicion that the 'You' is from Quillinan to Dora, but we are not quite ready to take up the further relationships of the pair.

So ends the little group of entries during the winter and spring of 1830–31. The Wordsworths, of course, saw many more friends than are here represented. Henry Taylor, in a letter to Miss Fenwick, says:

'I have seen a good deal more of Wordsworth than I ever saw before; I feel as if one could have a great deal of regard for him. I have had three or four breakfasts with him, and he is as agreeable in society as he is admirable in the powers of talking; so perfectly courteous and well-bred and simple in his manners. He met Jeffrey the other day at Sir J. Mackintosh's and at Jeffrey's request they were introduced. Lockhart beheld the ceremony, and told me that W. played the part of a man of the world to perfection,

much better than the smaller man, and did not appear to be conscious of anything having taken place between them before.'

In April Lamb was daily expecting a visit; and on the 13th, as we learn from Mr Lucas, Wordsworth called at Lamb's lodgings and took an excess of sugar. Lamb's contribution to the album, however, was made later.

The family returned to Rydal in the summer. Though John Stuart Mill visited them, and saw a great deal both of Wordsworth and Southey, he did not write in Dora's book. Remembering his conversion in 1828 by means of Wordsworth's poems, an entry from him would have been of interest; but it must also be remembered, from the lines *To the Utilitarians* sent in 1833 to Crabb Robinson, that Wordsworth was not in agreement with the cause Mill championed. That summer is one without much progress for the album; there are two drawings: one a delightful water-colour of Rydal by Westall, the other a pencil sketch of Elleray, Professor Wilson's place on Windermere, by Gibb; but they are overshadowed by the incidents connected with Scott's contribution of his last verses.

§ 6. SCOTT'S LAST VERSES

In the autumn of 1831, Wordsworth and Dora started from Rydal Mount to visit Sir Walter Scott before his departure for Italy. They travelled in an open carriage with one horse, driven by Dora, and Wordsworth, who was suffering severely from an inflammation of his eyes, would walk, with a green linen eye-shade, beside the carriage. In

a note to Scott dated September 16, 1831, Wordsworth describes the manner of the march. '"There's a man wi' a veil, and a lass drivin'," exclaimed a little urchin, as we entered merry Carlisle a couple of hours ago, on our way to Abbotsford.' They both took great delight in the rainbows and the coloured mists floating on the hills; and they cared far more for seeing the country than they did for travelling comforts. I know no record of the luggage taken with them, but I suspect that it was simple. There was included a small packet, nearly square, which indicated that Dora had her album with her.

The story of the last years of Sir Walter Scott, and his terrific struggle to retrieve the bankruptcy caused by Ballantyne's failure, are among the best-known incidents of literary history. We need merely recall that Wordsworth was paying this his final visit as a debt due to twenty-eight years' friendship. The two men had first met in 1803, Wordsworth then travelling with Dorothy. Samuel Rogers and his sister had run across the Wordsworths on that tour, when Coleridge was with them for a time, and they were all, says Rogers 'in a vehicle that looked very like a cart. Wordsworth and Coleridge were entirely occupied in talking about poetry; and the whole care of looking out for cottages where they might get refreshment and pass the night, as well as of seeing their poor horse fed and littered, devolved upon Miss Wordsworth. She was a most delightful person—so full of talent, so simple-minded, and so modest!' Dorothy's 'Journal' for 1803, kept up despite her duties as caretaker-extraordinary, records the friendly hospitality and the stream of anecdotes with which the then Sheriff received the

wanderers. The return visit was paid in 1805, when Scott and Mrs Scott came to Dove Cottage, and the men, with Sir Humphry Davy, climbed Helvellyn. 'We had ascended from Patterdale,' dictated Wordsworth in one of the Fenwick notes, 'and could not but admire the vigour with which Scott scrambled along that horn of the mountain called "Striding Edge." Our progress was necessarily slow, and was beguiled by Scott's telling many stories and amusing anecdotes, as was his custom. Sir Humphry Davy would probably have been better pleased if other topics had occasionally been interspersed, and some discussion entered upon: at all events he did not remain with us long at the top of the mountain, but left us to find our way down its steep side together into the Vale of Grasmere where, at my cottage, Mrs Scott was to meet us at dinner.' On this occasion Scott made the unfulfilled prediction to Wordsworth: 'I mean to live till I am *eighty*, and I shall write as long as I live.' In 1825 the two met again in the Lake District, Wordsworth and Dora taking the visitors over Lowther Castle. Shortly after Scott's return to Abbotsford the crash came; his doors were closed upon the stream of visitors; his wife died; he moved to lodgings, and grudged every hour not spent at his work.

Five years saw him again at Abbotsford, the doors reopening in mock gaiety for a last glimpse of a broken man. Repeated paralytic strokes had reduced an admirable vigour to a palsied feebleness. They affected more than his body. He nourished the delusion—naturally no one disabused him—that his debts were paid. He was waiting for the winter, expecting daily to be ordered south. The date of

departure from Abbotsford was finally set for September 23, and on the 19th came Wordsworth and Dora for their farewell visit.

Between Lockhart's chronology and that given by Wordsworth in dictating to Miss Fenwick there is a discrepancy which is fortunately cleared up by Charles Wordsworth in his *Annals of my Early Life*. We take it then that Wordsworth arrived on Monday the 19th. There was a little group of visitors at Abbotsford, though nothing like the crowds of earlier days; and to pass the evening, Allan, the historical painter, 'hanging over the back of a chair, told and acted odd stories in a humorous way. With this exhibition and his daughter's singing, Sir Walter was much amused, as indeed were we all so far as circumstances would allow.'

On the next morning an excursion was made to Newark Castle, with *Yarrow Revisited* as one result. Of Scott's condition, says Wordsworth: 'When we alighted from the carriage he walked pretty stoutly, and had great pleasure in revisiting these his favourite haunts.... On our return in the afternoon we had to cross the Tweed directly opposite Abbotsford. The wheels of our carriage grated upon the pebbles in the bed of the stream that there flows somewhat rapidly; a rich but sad light of rather a purple than a golden hue was spread over the Eildon Hills at that moment; and, thinking it probable that it might be the last time Sir Walter would cross the stream, I was not a little moved....' On the morrow, Wednesday, there was a similar expedition to Melrose, from which they returned, perhaps via Chiefswood Cottage, where lived the Lockharts. This was near

enough to Abbotsford for companionship, but removed from the direct stream of guests. Scott had been accustomed on occasion to go to his son-in-law at Chiefswood for refuge and a rest; whether he was present this day, I do not know, but there, at any rate, Dora's album made its appearance and was inscribed:

'Who fancies when Miss Wordsworth took
From groaning shelves their tiniest book
Without her host (of swains) she reckoned?
Another name (tho' scarce so grand)
Was destined, one may guess, to stand
On "Nearly ready—Volume second."

'J. G. LOCKHART,
'Chiefswood, *Sept.* 21, 1831.'

The 'one may guess' replaces some phrase obliterated. Avoiding discussion of the 'other name,' we return to the theme of Abbotsford. For that I refer again to Lockhart, who proceeds in his narrative: 'Sitting that evening in the library, Sir Walter said a good deal about the singularity that Fielding and Smollett had both been driven abroad by declining health, and never returned—which circumstances, though his language was rather cheerful at the time, he had often before alluded to in darker fashion; and Mr Wordsworth expressed his regret that neither of those great masters of romance appeared to have been surrounded with any due marks of respect in the close of life. I happened to observe that Cervantes, on his last journey to Madrid, met with an incident which seemed to have given him no common satisfaction. Sir Walter did not remember the passage, and desired me to find it out in the life by Pellicer which

was at hand, and translate it. I did so, and he listened with lively, though pensive, interest....' Allan, who was present, later told Lockhart that he remembered 'nothing he ever saw with so much sad pleasure as the attitudes and aspect of Scott and Wordsworth as the story went on.' Wordsworth sat between Dora and Sir Walter, and wore the deep green eye-shade.

Early the next morning, before he came into the breakfast-room, Scott wrote a few stanzas in the little album. 'While putting the book into her hand,' says Wordsworth, 'in his own study, standing by his desk, he said to her in my presence: "I should not have done anything of this kind but for your father's sake; they are probably the last verses I shall ever write."' They stand as follows:

'Tis well the gifted eye which saw
The first light sparks of fancy burn
Should mark its latest flash with awe
Low glimmering from its funeral urn.

'And thou mayst mark the hint, fair maid
How vain is worldly esteem
Good fortune turns affections fade
And fancy is an idle

'Yet not on this poor form alone,
My palsied hand and deafend ear
But on my country's fate
The bolts of fate seemed doom to speed

'The storm might whistle round my head
I would not deprecate the ill
So I might say when it was sped
My Country be though G[l]orious still

'W. SCOTT

'Abbotsford,
'22 *September*, 1831.'

'Tis well the gifted eyes which see
The first bright sparkles of fancy's flame
Kindled in early childhood's placid waste
Low glimmering from the funeral
And then, with angel wands the hint fair maid
Have power on worldly esteem
Good fortune, honest Affections faith
And fancy's wand
Efficacious on these poor forms alone
My patient hand must clasp and bear
Pain as my country's fate
The bolts of fate must doom be spent
The storm must wheel round my head
I would not deprecate the ill
So I might say at last when it was past
My Country be thou free

Lyscott

Abbotsford
22 September 1831

Of the shaky writing and the misconjunctions of thought and hand, I need say nothing. I have transcribed it exactly as written, with one exception. He omitted the initial S in his name[1]. It is not remarkable that when Wordsworth wrote to Mrs Hemans, speaking of Scott, he said, 'We prize this memorial very much, and the more so as an affecting testimony of his regard at the time when, as the verses prove, his health of body and powers of mind were much impaired and shaken.' Matthew Arnold mentions the verses in his reference to the album in *Haworth Churchyard*; he speaks of

> '...a book which of world-famous souls
> Kept the memorial;—bard,
> Warrior, statesman, had sign'd
> Their names; chief glory of all,
> Scott had bestowed there his last
> Breathings of song, with a pen
> Tottering, a death-stricken hand.'

But for anyone less than Wordsworth, or Wordsworth's daughter, the fragment were better unwritten. In the album it is followed by the sonnet, copied in by Mrs Wordsworth, which Wordsworth began to compose as the carriage grated on the pebbles crossing the Tweed on the return from Yarrow—the sonnet which reads:

> 'A trouble, not of clouds, or weeping rain,
> Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
> Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height:
> Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain
> For kindred Power departing from their sight;

[1] The initial shown in the facsimile has been inserted later, perhaps by Mrs Wordsworth.

While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
Saddens his voice again, and yet again.
Lift up your hearts, ye Mourners! for the might
Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes;
Blessings and prayers in nobler retinue
Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
Ye winds of ocean, and the midland sea,
Wafting your Charge to soft Parthenope!'

§ 7. NASO ON TOUR

Charles Wordsworth, Dora's cousin, was at Abbotsford during the farewell visit chronicled in the last section, and he left with Wordsworth and Dora on September 22 for Edinburgh. They were proposing to tour the Highlands in the carriage with the young horse, Naso; Dora's duties were to be the exact replicas of Dorothy's duties nearly thirty years before. Charles accompanied the pair as far as Callander, then separated to return, laden with messages and with the album, to the Lakes. Sarah Hutchinson, writing to Edward Quillinan on October 1, says 'we expect him this evening.'

In the meanwhile, Scott left Abbotsford, attended by Lockhart and his daughter Anne, on the morning of September 23. By easy stages they reached London on the 28th. It was a difficult journey for his guardians. Lockhart writes: 'Notwithstanding all his infirmities, he would not pass any object to which he had ever attached special interest, without getting out of the carriage to revisit it. His anxiety (for example) about the gigantic British or

Danish effigy in the churchyard at Penrith, which we had all seen dozens of times before, seemed as great as if not a year had fled since 1797.' He arrived in London just at the time of the riots about the Reform Bill, which seemed the 'bolts of fate' upon his country. The intensely formed habit of writing would not leave him utterly, though palsy made it for the most part impossible to get anything down. When he could, he sought refuge in his diary. Thus on October 2:

'A total prostration of bodily strength is my chief complaint. I cannot walk half a mile. There is, besides, some mental confusion, with the extent of which I am not, perhaps, fully acquainted. I am perhaps setting.... I would compound for a little pain instead of this heartless muddiness of mind...the ruin which I fear involves that of my country.'

Scott had another year of breathing—hardly of life. Let us rather turn and follow the wanderers from Edinburgh. They were at Callander on September 28, reached Killin on the 29th, Tyndrum on the 30th, Dalmally on October 1, and halted at Bunawe for the 2nd and 3rd. Visiting Mull on the 4th and 5th, they returned to Bunawe for two or three days, and then made their way leisurely back to the Lakes. Wordsworth writes in November to Lady Frederick Bentinck:

'You are quite right, dear Lady Frederick, in congratulating me on my late ramble in Scotland. I set off with a severe inflammation in one of my eyes, which was removed by being so much in the open air; and for more than a month I scarcely saw a newspaper, or heard of their

contents. During this time we almost forgot, my daughter and I, the deplorable state of the country.... We travelled in an open carriage with one horse, driven by Dora; while we were in the Highlands I walked most of the way by the side of the carriage, which left us leisure to observe the beautiful appearances. The rainbows and coloured mists floating about the hills were more like enchantment than anything I ever saw, even among the Alps. There was in particular, the day we made the tour of Loch Lomond in the steam-boat, a fragment of a rainbow, so broad, so splendid, so glorious, with its reflection in the calm water, it astonished everyone on board, a party of foreigners especially, who could not refrain from expressing their pleasure in a more lively manner than we are accustomed to do.'

Professor Harper, whose *Life of Wordsworth* has been called upon for many of the above details, has published a delightful letter from Dora to her mother, written from Bunawe. She sends, dating the letter October 7, 'a report of our proceedings since we parted from Charles yesterday week at Callander,' and she encloses half a dozen sonnets, all 'written since the day we parted from Charles.' No. 1 is *A trouble, not of clouds or weeping rain.* At the foot of it is the request 'To be written in my little book after Sir Walter's verses'; and at the end of the six she puts, 'You will please take care of these Gentlemen, as we have no fair copy of them.' When the letter arrived, Mrs Wordsworth copied the sonnet into the album, misdating it September 6, 1831.

The 'proceedings' are mostly concerned with Naso. Before their start Naso had been described by Dorothy to

Mrs Clarkson as 'a very steady horse.' Indeed, so steady and slow did he turn out to be, that Dora in the cart had some difficulty in keeping up with Wordsworth on foot. They became discontented. 'Even when at Edinburgh we had tried to buy another horse, but could not succeed, and enquired for one at every village we came to.' This was on the outward journey; when she comes in her narrative to the return from Mull, the chronicle of Naso resumes.

'Father has just been saying he thinks we must make the best of our way homewards; but we are in a puzzle about the carriage; we cannot get a horse, and really Naso is not fit to travel. From change of stables I suppose he has caught a bad cold; he is better to-day, but, of course, much pulled down.... N.B.—Observe Naso's failure was entirely owing to want of strength from his youth, and we were very gentle with him; after leaving Edinburgh he did not travel on an average *fifteen* miles *a day—no, not so much, as we can prove, and before not twenty, certainly not*, nay not above *ten*, including days' rests, of course. By hook or crook, God willing, we shall be at Carlisle on the 20th, and we will do the best we can for carriage, etc.'

In this letter Dora gives her father's opinion about daughters. 'Father joins me in congratulations to Mr and Mrs H. on the birth of a son, but from his own experience agrees with Mr H. in thinking that Daughters are much more useful, and consequently a more desirable article.' But compliments cannot keep her from the anxious subject of Naso. He appears again in a postscript: 'Naso is an excellent feeder. He was never once off his food on the journey, and even his bad cold does not appear to have affected his appetite, and we have no fault to find with him,

as gentle and tractable a creature as can be. It was our fault for putting a child to man's work.' However, I judge the pony gathered an access of strength from thoughts of home, for they arrived sooner than they expected, on October 20.

At the time of their return Rydal Mount seems cheerful, save that Wordsworth is depressed about the condition of the country. Dora writes on October 26 to Eliza Hamilton, saying 'all are well, Father, Mother and Aunts, the first-mentioned still prophesying ruin and desolation on this hitherto flourishing spot of earth. The evil which he foresees from this dreadful Reform Bill quite weighs his spirit down.' But 1831 passed without more than fanciful causes for depression. Dora herself was strong and healthy, as we learn from a letter of Dorothy's to Crabb Robinson on December 1.

The year 1832 was not so fortunate. In that year Dorothy, after three years of good health, began again to suffer from her mysterious affliction. On April 1 Wordsworth writes to his brother that 'our dear sister makes no progress towards recovery of strength. She is very feeble, never quits her room, and passes most of the day in, or upon, the bed. She does not suffer much pain, and is very cheerful, and nothing troubles her but public affairs and the sense of requiring so much attention.' She seems to have rallied by May; and in that month contributes the verses *To my niece Dora*, which Professor Knight prints under the year 1827. To be sure, the transcription in the album by Mary Wordsworth is dated January, 1827; but it is never safe to take Mrs Wordsworth's dates without examination, and there is reference in the poem to Scott's

farewell. The wrong date is cancelled by a note underneath:

'Composed in May 1832 by me.
'D. W.'

Of the verses, the last quatrain is the best known:

'Yet still a lurking wish prevails;
That when from life we all have passed,
The Friends who loved thy Father's name
On her's a thought may cast.'

From now on, Dorothy is seen only as an invalid; 'her reason,' says Professor Harper, 'no longer in continuous command.' At first she still enjoys some measure of activity. In 1833 and 1834 we have such comments as (from Dora to her cousin Christopher), 'Dear aunt goes out every day this beautiful weather...and in an evening, when we are alone, she sometimes brings her work down and sits an hour or two with us.' Her manner of going out was in a phaeton, driven by Dora, and drawn by Naso. Gradually she became less able to leave her room, and the family were sometimes hard pressed to find delicacies that would please her wayward spirit. Wordsworth writes to Crabb Robinson in 1835, with Mrs Wordsworth as amanuensis: 'My sister lived some time in Norfolk when she was young, and fancies that she should like some Norfolk beefins, and has often said she was sure if Mr Robinson knew how she longed for them, you would send her some. Could you contrive to bring her a box? All kinds of fruit are grateful to her.' Three years later Dora writes to Christopher: 'Nothing seems to give her pleasure, not even the sight of her dear brother...and often and often he comes down from her

room, his eyes filled with tears, saying, "Well, all I can do for her now is to heat her nightcap for her. I have done it twenty times within the last quarter of an hour—that seems to give her a momentary pleasure, and that is some comfort."'

§ 8. CHARLES AND MARY LAMB

After a visit to Moresby in the summer of 1832, Wordsworth and Dora returned to the Lakes and again wintered there. He was having trouble with his eyes, and found the long winter evenings a burden. The following extracts, from Dora's letters to Christopher Wordsworth, come about this time. 'My father's eyes,' she says, 'are better, but too weak to allow of his writing or even looking at a book, and as he may not yet employ his mind, he finds these long firelight and candlelight evenings distressing and tiresome in the extreme. My mother and I read to him a great deal, but as neither her chest nor my throat is of the very strongest, we find it fatiguing, and he cannot always keep awake....' Again, in better weather—perhaps during the following spring: 'I have just now as little idle time as you, for my dear father is still a blind man; but, thank God, the active inflammation has entirely subsided...and he has now permission to go into the garden; for the last ten days he has been a prisoner to a dark room, and so very, very patient, but not very good, for compose sonnets he will, in spite of all the dreadful threats that are held out by his medical attendants; nor will the recollection of blisters on blisters, or leeches on leeches keep him quiet. Within

To Dora W——, on being asked by her father to write here. — — — — — — —

An Albion is a Banquet: from the store,
In his intelligential Orchard growing,
Your Sire might heap your board to overflowing;
One shaking of the Tree — 'twould ask no more
To set a Salad forth, more rich than that
Which Evelyn† in his princely cookery fancied;
Or that, more rare, by Eve's neat hands enhanced,
Where, a pleased guest, the angelic Virtue sat —
But, like the all-grasping Founder of the Feast,
Whom Nathan to the sinning King did tax,
From his less wealthy neighbours he exacts;
Spares his own flocks, and takes the Poor Man's beast —
Obedient to his bidding, Lo, I am,
A jealous, meek, contributory

Lamb

† Acetaria, a Discourse of Sallets, by J. E. 1706. —

the last few weeks he has composed upwards of forty sonnets, I believe, principally on subjects connected with his late tour. . . .'

There are during this period several entries worth recording; but it is difficult to give the precise details of the signing. Lamb's contribution, though printed elsewhere, bears repetition.

'To Dora W——, on being asked by her father to write here.

'An Album is a Banquet: from the store,
In his intelligential Orchard growing,
Your Sire might heap your board to overflowing;—
One shaking of the Tree—'twould ask no more
To set a Salad forth, more rich than that
Which Evelyn[1] in his princely cookery fancied;
Or that, more rare, by Eve's neat hands enhanced,
Where, a pleased guest, the angelic Virtue sat.—
But, like the all-grasping Founder of the Feast,
Whom Nathan to the sinning King did tax,
From his less wealthy neighbours he exacts;
Spares his own flocks, and takes the Poor Man's beast.—
Obedient to his bidding, Lo, I am,
A zealous, meek, *contributory*
Lamb.'

[1] 'Acetaria, a Discourse of Sallets, by J. E., 1706.'

The verses are undated, but were written late in 1832 or early in 1833. Lamb's little volume of album verses came out in 1830, but for some years after as well as before he was in demand for keepsakes. In January he wrote a note to Southey, saying that as he had been doing some verses

for Wordsworth's and Quillinan's daughters, the thought struck him that Edith Southey might like a sonnet for herself; which, therefore, he enclosed. He told Crabb Robinson about this time that by constant practice he could 'write acrostics and album verses, and such things, at request, with a facility that approaches that of the Italian *Improvisatori*.' In the original in Dora's album there are one or two erasures. 'Banquet,' in the first line, is a substitute. The reference to Evelyn recalls a sentence by John Mitford, cousin of the author of *Our Village*, who visited Lamb a few years earlier and found that he was 'very fond of picking up the little duodecimo volumes of Evelyn; he mentioned his book on "Sallets" with delight.'

There is no need to recapitulate the whole history of Wordsworth and Lamb. They first met at Stowey, in 1797, and had by this time been friends, with occasional differences, for thirty-five years. One immortal evening in which both took part crops up when we think of them together. It was Haydon's party, in 1817; I quote the description from Mr Lucas.

'The guests were Wordsworth, Monkhouse, Lamb, Keats, Ritchie, Landseer, and the unfortunate Comptroller of Stamps, a Mr Kingston. This is Haydon's account of the evening: "On December 28th the immortal dinner came off in my painting-room, with Jerusalem towering up behind us as a background. Wordsworth was in fine cue, and we had a glorious set-to—on Homer, Shakespeare, Milton and Virgil. Lamb got exceedingly merry and exquisitely witty; and his fun in the midst of Wordsworth's solemn intonations of oratory was like the sarcasm and wit of the fool in the intervals of Lear's passion. He made a

speech and voted me absent, and made them drink my health. 'Now,' said Lamb, 'you old lake poet, you rascally poet, why do you call Voltaire dull?' We all defended Wordsworth, and affirmed there was a state of mind when Voltaire would be dull. 'Well,' said Lamb, 'here's Voltaire —the Messiah of the French nation, and a very proper one too[1].'

'"He then, in a strain of humour beyond description, abused me for putting Newton's head into my picture— 'a fellow,' said he, 'who believed nothing unless it was as clear as the three sides of a triangle.' And then he and Keats agreed he had destroyed all the poetry of the rainbow by reducing it to the prismatic colours. It was impossible to resist him, and we all drank 'Newton's health, and confusion to mathematics.' It was delightful to see the good-humour of Wordsworth in giving in to all our frolics without affectation and laughing as heartily as the best of us. . . .

'"In the morning of this delightful day, a gentleman, a perfect stranger, had called on me. He said he knew my friends, had an enthusiasm for Wordsworth, and begged I would procure him the happiness of an introduction. He told me he was a comptroller of stamps, and often had corresponded with the poet. I thought it a liberty; but still, as he seemed a gentleman, I told him he might come.

'"When we retired to tea we found the comptroller. In introducing him to Wordsworth I forgot to say who he was. After a little time the comptroller looked down, looked up and said to Wordsworth, 'Don't you think, sir, Milton was a great genius?' Keats looked at me, Wordsworth looked at the comptroller. Lamb, who was dozing by the

[1] In Haydon's painting of *The Entry into Jerusalem*, Wordsworth appears in the character of a disciple, and Voltaire as 'a sneering Jewish elder.' The painting was sold in 1831, and went to America, to Haydon's sorrow. It is now in the Roman Catholic Cathedral at Cincinnati.

fire turned round and said, 'Pray, sir, did you say Milton was a great genius?' 'No, sir; I asked Mr Wordsworth if he were not.' 'Oh,' said Lamb, 'then you are a silly fellow.' 'Charles! my dear Charles!' said Wordsworth; but Lamb, perfectly innocent of the confusion he had created, was off again by the fire.

'"After an awful pause the comptroller said, 'Don't you think Newton a great genius?' I could not stand it any longer. Keats put his head into my books. Ritchie squeezed in a laugh. Wordsworth seemed asking himself, 'Who is this?' Lamb got up, and taking a candle, said, 'Sir, will you allow me to look at your phrenological development?' He then turned his back on the poor man, and at every question of the comptroller he chaunted:

'Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John
Went to bed with his breeches on.'

The man in office, finding Wordsworth did not know who he was, said in a spasmodic and half-chuckling anticipation of assured victory, 'I have had the honour of some correspondence with you, Mr Wordsworth.' 'With me, sir?' said Wordsworth, 'not that I remember.' 'Don't you, sir? I am a comptroller of stamps.' There was a dead silence —the comptroller evidently thinking that was enough. While we were waiting for Wordsworth's reply, Lamb sung out:

'Hey diddle diddle
The cat and the fiddle.'

'My dear Charles!' said Wordsworth.—

'Diddle diddle dumpling, my son John,'

chaunted Lamb, and then rising, exclaimed, 'Do let me have another look at that gentleman's organs.' Keats and I hurried Lamb into the painting-room, shut the door and

gave way to inextinguishable laughter. Monkhouse followed and tried to get Lamb away. We went back, but the comptroller was irreconcilable. We soothed and smiled and asked him to supper. He stayed, though his dignity was sorely affected. However, being a good-natured man, we parted all in good humour, and no ill effects followed.

'"All the while, until Monkhouse succeeded, we could hear Lamb struggling in the painting-room and calling at intervals, 'Who is that fellow? Allow me to see his organs once more.'

'"It was indeed an immortal evening. Wordsworth's fine intonation as he quoted Milton and Virgil, Keats's eager inspired look, Lamb's quaint sparkle of lambent humour, so speeded the stream of conversation, that in my life I never passed a more delightful time. All our fun was within bounds. Not a word passed that an apostle might not have listened to. It was a night worthy of the Elizabethan age, and my solemn Jerusalem flashing up by the flame of the fire, with Christ hanging over us like a vision, all made up a picture which will long glow upon—

'that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.'

Keats made Ritchie promise he would carry his 'Endymion' to the great desert of Sahara and fling it into the midst.

'"Poor Ritchie went to Africa, and died, as Lamb foresaw, in 1819. Keats died in 1821, at Rome. C. Lamb is gone, joking to the last. Monkhouse is dead, and Wordsworth and I are the only two now living (1841) of that glorious party."'

A parallel which comes, curiously enough, from Voltaire, is the visit of Candide to Seignior Pococurante at

Venice: 'Candide, seeing a Milton, asked the Senator if he did not think that author a great man?'

To return to the period of the album verses, the year following their composition, 1834, was the last of Lamb's life. He was much in the company of his sister, whose intermittent illness had returned. He writes to Miss Fryer:

'It is no new thing for me to be left to my sister. When she is not violent, her rambling chat is better to me than the sense and sanity of this world. Her heart is obscured, not buried; it breaks out occasionally; and one can discern a strong mind struggling with the billows that have gone over it. I could be nowhere happier than under the same roof with her. Her memory is unnaturally strong; and from ages past, if we may so call the earliest records of our poor life, she fetches thousands of names and things that would never have dawned upon me again, and thousands from the ten years she lived before me. What took place from early girlhood to her coming of age principally lives again (every important thing and every trifle) in her brain, with the vividness of real presence. For twelve hours incessantly she will pour out without intermission all her past life, forgetting nothing, pouring out name after name to the Waldens, as a dream; sense and nonsense; truths and errors huddled together; a medley between inspiration and possession. What things we are! I know you will bear with me, talking of these things. It seems to ease me; for I have nobody to tell these things to now.'

Talfourd adds to this description. Lamb, he says, speaks of his sister

'pouring out memories of all the events and persons of her younger days;—but he does not mention, what I am

able to add, that her ramblings often sparkled with brilliant description and shattered beauty. She would fancy herself in the days of Queen Anne or George the First, and describe the brocaded dames and courtly manners, as though she had been bred among them, in the best style of the old comedy. It was all broken and disjointed, so that the hearer could remember little of her discourse; but the fragments were like the jewelled speeches of Congreve, only shaken from their setting. There was sometimes even a vein of crazy logic running through them, associating things essentially most dissimilar, but connecting them by a verbal association in strange order. As a mere physical instance of deranged intellect, her condition was, I believe, extraordinary; it was as if the finest elements of mind had been shaken into fantastic combinations like those of a kaleidoscope;—but not for the purpose of exhibiting a curious phenomenon of mental aberration are the aspects of her insanity unveiled, but to illustrate the moral force of gentleness by which the faculties that thus sparkled when restraining wisdom was withdrawn, were subjected to its sway, in her periods of reason.'

Continuing to borrow from Mr Lucas's *Life of Lamb*, we see that in February, 1834, comes his last letter to Wordsworth, 'which characteristically was an appeal for help for a friend in difficulties,' a Miss Martin. 'O if you can recommend her,' says Lamb, 'how would I love you—if I could love you better. Pray, pray, recommend her. She is as good a human creature,—next to my Sister, perhaps the most exemplary female I ever knew.'

One more sketch should be inserted. It comes in the summer of 1834, and was written by Nathaniel Parker Willis, an American. 'Willis, then a young man of twenty-

eight,' says Mr Lucas, 'was loitering observantly through Europe for the *New York Mirror*, to which paper, unknown to his English friends (with whom he passed for a diplomatist in the making), he was sending lively travel sketches under the title "Pencillings by the Way." . . . In the course of his lion-hunting campaign in London, Willis met Crabb Robinson and requested an introduction to Elia.' Landor had introduced him to Crabb Robinson, and the latter invited Charles and Mary Lamb to meet him, without suspicion that they were to be served up in due course in the American press. When the discovery was later made, both Landor and Robinson were justly furious. 'But,' as Mr Lucas continues, 'Willis's indiscretions were not malicious, and his account of the breakfast with the Lambs in Robinson's rooms is good reading.'

'There was a rap at the door at last, and enter a gentleman in black small-clothes and gaiters, short and very slight in his person, his head set on his shoulders with a thoughtful, forward bent, his hair just sprinkled with gray, a beautiful deep-set eye, aquiline nose, and a very indescribable mouth. Whether it expressed most humour or feeling, good-nature of a kind of whimsical peevishness, or twenty other things which passed over it by turns, I cannot in the least be certain.

'His sister, whose literary reputation is associated very closely with her brother's, and who as the original of "Bridget Elia" is a kind of object for literary affection, came in after him. She is a small, bent figure, evidently a victim to ill-health, and hears with difficulty. Her face has been, I should think, a fine and handsome one, and her bright gray eye is still full of intelligence and fire. They both seemed quite at home in our friend's chamber; and as there

was to be no one else, we immediately drew round the breakfast-table. I had set a large arm-chair for Miss Lamb. "Don't take it, Mary," said Lamb, pulling it away from her very gravely, "it looks as if you were going to have a tooth drawn."

'The conversation was very local. Our host and his guest had not met for some weeks, and they had a great deal to say of some mutual friends. Perhaps in this way, however, I saw more of the author, for his manner of speaking of them, and the quaint humour with which he complained of one, and spoke well of another, was so in the vein of his inimitable writings, that I could have fancied myself listening to an audible composition of new Elia. Nothing could be more delightful than the kindness and affection between the brother and his sister, though Lamb was continually taking advantage of her deafness to mystify her with the most singular gravity upon every topic that was started. "Poor Mary!" said he, "she hears all of an epigram but the point." "What are you saying of me, Charles?" she asked. "Mr Willis," said he, raising his voice, "admires *your Confessions of a Drunkard* very much, and I was saying it was no merit of yours that you understood the subject." We had been speaking of this admirable essay (which is his own) half an hour before.

'The conversation turned upon literature after a while, and our host could not express himself strongly enough in admiration of Webster's speeches, which he said were exciting the greatest attention among the politicians and lawyers of England. Lamb said, "I don't know much of American authors. Mary, there, devours Cooper's novels with a ravenous appetite, with which I have no sympathy. The only American book I ever read twice, was the 'Journal of Edward John Woolman,' a quaker preacher and tailor, whose character is one of the finest I ever met

with. He tells a story or two about negro slaves, that brought the tears into my eyes. I can read no prose now, though Hazlitt sometimes, to be sure—but then Hazlitt is worth all modern prose-writers put together."

'Mr R. spoke of buying a book of Lamb's a few days before, and I mentioned my having bought a copy of "Elia" the last day I was in America, to send as a parting gift to one of the most lovely and talented women in our country. "What did you give for it?" said Lamb. "About seven and sixpence." "Permit me to pay you that," said he, and with the utmost earnestness he counted out the money upon the table. "I never yet wrote anything that would sell," he continued, "I am the publisher's ruin. My last poem won't sell a copy. Have you seen it, Mr Willis?" I had not. "It's only eighteen-pence, and I'll give you sixpence towards it"; and he described to me where I should find it sticking up in a shop window in the Strand[1].

'Lamb ate nothing, and complained in a querulous tone of the veal-pie. There was a kind of potted fish (of which I forget the name at this moment) which he had expected our friend would procure for him. He inquired whether there was not a morsel left perhaps in the bottom of the last pot. Mr R. was not sure. "Send and see," said Lamb, "and if the pot has been cleaned, bring me the cover. I think the sight of it would do me good." The cover was brought, upon which there was the picture of the fish. Lamb kissed it with a reproachful look at his friend, and then left the table and began to wander round the room with a broken, uncertain step, as if he almost forgot to put one leg before the other. His sister rose after a while, and commenced walking up and down very much in the same manner on the opposite side of the table, and in the course of half an hour they took their leave.'

[1] Lamb referred to *Satan in Search of a Wife*.

On a picture by Leonardi Da Vinci
called the Virgin of the Rocks.

Eternal lady with the virgin grace,
Heavenborn thy Jesus seemeth sure,
And thou a virgin pure.
Lady most perfect, when thy sinless face
Men look upon, they wish to be
A Catholic, Madonna fair to worship thee

Mary Ann Lamb

Sept 7 1837

After this we shall put Mary Lamb's contribution to Dora's album, though it occurs later on, and was dated nearly three years after Charles Lamb's death. It is:

'On a picture by Leonardi Da Vinci, called
The Virgin of the Rocks.

'Maternal lady with the virgin grace,
Heaven-born thy Jesus seemeth sure,
And thou a virgin pure.
Lady most perfect, when thy sinless face
Men look upon, they wish to be
A Catholic, Madonna fair to worship thee.

'MARY ANN LAMB.

'*Sept* 7, 1837.'

It recalls the passage in the essay of 'Bridget Elia' which refers to the buying of Leonardos when the pair were 'in the middle state' between poverty and competence. The actual picture, a framed copy of 'The Virgin of the Rocks,' was given to Mary Lamb by Crabb Robinson in 1816—by which gift Lamb was made 'delighted as a child.'

§ 9. HARTLEY COLERIDGE

To return to 1832, there is in that year a sonnet to Wordsworth by the simple, kindly, and generous Hartley Coleridge. Hartley Coleridge, said Bagehot at the beginning of his sympathetic study, 'was not like the Duke of Wellington.' Children were urged by Wellington's example 'always to perform business,' 'NEVER fail to do their best,' and to 'beware of procrastination.' But, continues Bagehot,

'What a wilderness were this sad world,
If man were always man and never child!

'And it were almost a worse wilderness if there were not some, to relieve the dull monotony of activity, who are children through life; who act on wayward impulse, and whose will has never come; who toil not and who spin not; who always have "fair Eden's simpleness": and of such was Hartley Coleridge.' In Harriet Martineau's phrasing, Hartley was through life 'a sick child.'

Harriet Martineau's tongue was not always so smooth in speaking of Hartley; but like some other vigorous doers of good works she was prone to criticise the idle. Walter Bagehot understood children better than the lady who wrote books for them. The following long passage from his *Literary Studies* is an instance of beautiful comprehension:

'A curious instance of poetic anticipation was in this instance vouchsafed to Wordsworth. When Hartley was six years old, he addressed to him these verses, perhaps the best ever written on a real and visible child:

> 'O thou, whose fancies from afar are brought,
> Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel
> And fittest to unutterable thought
> The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol;
> Thou fairy voyager, that dost float
> In such clear water that thy boat
> May rather seem
> To brood on air than on an earthly stream;
> O blessed vision, happy child,
> Thou art so exquisitely wild,
> I think of thee with many fears
> For what may be thy lot in future years.
> .....

O too industrious folly!
O vain and causeless melancholy!
Nature will either end thee quite,
Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,
Preserve for thee by individual right
A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.

'And so it was. As often happens, being very little of a boy in actual childhood, Hartley preserved into manhood and age all of the boyhood which he had ever possessed—its beaming imagination and its wayward will. He had none of the natural roughness of that age. He never played—partly from weakness, for he was very small, but more from awkwardness. His uncle Southey used to say he had two left hands, and might have added that they were both useless. He could no more have achieved football, or mastered cricket, or kept in with the hounds, than he could have followed Charles's Wain or played pitch and toss with Jupiter's satellites. Nor was he very excellent at schoolwork. He showed, indeed, no deficiency. The Coleridge family have inherited from the old scholar of Ottery St Mary a certain classical facility which could not desert the son of Samuel Taylor. But his real strength was in his own mind. All children have a world of their own, as distinct from that of the grown people who gravitate around them as the dreams of girlhood from our prosaic life; as the ideas of the kitten that plays with the falling leaves, from those of her carnivorous mother that catches mice and is sedulous in her domestic duties. But generally about this interior existence, children are dumb. You have warlike ideas, but you cannot say to a sinewy relative, "My dear aunt, I wonder when the big bush in the garden will begin to walk about; I'm sure it's a crusader, and I was cutting it all the day with my steel sword. But what do you think, aunt, for I'm puzzled about its legs, because you see, aunt, it has

only *one* stalk; and besides, aunt, the leaves." You cannot remark this in secular life; but you hack at the infelicitous bush till you do not altogether reject the idea that your small garden is Palestine, and yourself the most adventurous of knights. Hartley had this, of course, like any other dreamy child, but in his case it was accompanied with the faculty of speech, and an extraordinary facility in continuous story-telling. In the very earliest childhood he had conceived a complete outline of a country like England, whereof he was king himself, and in which there were many wars, and rumours of wars, and foreign relations and statesmen, and rebels and soldiers. "My people, Derwent," he used to begin, "are giving me much pain; they want to go to war." This faculty, as was natural, showed itself before he went to school, but he carried on the habit of fanciful narration even into that bleak and ungenial region. "It was not," says his brother Derwent, "by a series of tales, but by one continuous tale, regularly evolved, and possessing a real unity, that he enchained the attention of his auditors, night after night, as we lay in bed, for a space of years, and not unfrequently for hours together." . . . "There was certainly," he adds, "a great variety of persons sharply characterised, who appeared on the stage in combination and not in succession." Connected, in Hartley, with this premature development of the imagination, there was a singular deficiency in what may be called the *sense* of reality. It is alleged that he hardly knew that Ejuxrea, which is the name of his kingdom, was not as solid a *terra firma* as Keswick or Ambleside. The deficiency showed itself on other topics. His father used to tell a story of his metaphysical questioning. When he was about five years old, he was asked, doubtless by the paternal metaphysician, some question as to why he was called Hartley. "Which Hartley?" replied the boy. "Why, is there more than one Hartley?"

"Yes, there is a deal of Hartleys; there is Picture Hartley (Hazlitt had painted a picture of him), and Shadow Hartley, and there's Echo Hartley, and there's Catchmefast Hartley," seizing his own arm very eagerly, and as if reflecting on the "summject and ommject," which is to say, being in a hopeless confusion. We do not hear whether he was puzzled and perplexed by such difficulties in later life. . . but considering the idle dreaminess of his youth and manhood, we doubt if Hartley ever got over his preliminary doubts—ever properly grasped the idea of fact and reality. This is not nonsense. If you attend acutely, you may observe that in few things do people differ more than in their perfect and imperfect realisation of this earth. To the Duke of Wellington a coat was a coat; "there was no mistake"; no reason to disbelieve it; and he carried to his grave a perfect and indubitable persuasion that he really did (what was his best exploit), without fluctuation, *shave* on the morning of the battle of Waterloo. You could not have made him doubt it. But to many people who will never be Field Marshals, there is on such points, not rational doubt, but instinctive questioning. "Who the devil," said Lord Byron, "could *make* such a world? No one, I believe." "Cast your thoughts," says a very different writer, "back on the time when our ancient buildings were first reared. Consider the churches all around us; how many generations have passed since stone was put upon stone, till the whole edifice was finished! The first movers and instruments of its erection, the minds that planned it, and the limbs that wrought at it, the pious hands that contributed to it, and the holy lips that consecrated it, have long, long ago been taken away, yet we benefit by their good deed. Does it not seem strange that men should be able, not merely by acting on others, not by a continued influence carried on through many minds in succession, but by a single direct

act, to come into contact with us, and, as if with their own hand, to benefit us who live centuries later?" Or again, speaking of the lower animals: "Can anything be more marvellous or startling, than that we should have a race of beings about us, whom we do but see, and as little know their state, or can describe their interests or their destiny, as we can tell of the inhabitants of the sun and moon? It is indeed a very overpowering thought, that we hold intercourse with creatures who are as much strangers to us, as mysterious as if they were the fabulous, unearthly beings, more powerful than man, and yet his slaves, which Eastern superstitions have invented. . . . Cast your thoughts abroad on the whole number of them, large and small, in vast forests, or in the water, or in the air, and then say whether the presence of such countless multitudes, so various in their natures, so strange and wild in their shapes, is not" as incredible as anything can be. We go into a street, and see it thronged with men, and we say, Is it *true*, *are* there these men? We look on a creeping river, till we say, *Is* there this river? We enter the law courts: we watch the patient Chancellor: we hear the droning wigs:—surely this is not real,—this is a dream,—nobody would do *that*,—it is a delusion. We are really, as the sceptics insinuate, but "sensations and impressions," in groups or alone, that float up and down; or, as the poet teaches, phantoms and images, whose idle stir but mocks the calm reality of the "pictures on the wall." All this will be called dreamy; but it is exactly because it *is* dreamy that we notice it. Hartley Coleridge was a dreamer: he began with Ejuxrea, and throughout his years, he but slumbered and slept. Life was to him a floating haze, a disputable mirage: you must not treat him like a believer in stocks and stones—you might as well say he was a man of business.'

Long afterwards, a picture of him at Oxford was re-

called by one who was a contemporary there. 'Leaning his head on one shoulder, turning up his dark bright eyes, and swinging backwards and forwards in his chair, he would hold forth by the hour, for no one wished to interrupt him, on whatever subject might have been started—either of literature, politics, or religion—with an originality of thought, a force of illustration, which I doubt if any man then living, except his father, could have surpassed.' It was after Oxford that he began to 'wander like a breeze,' that like Wordsworth he went up into the hills and 'applied to the sensuous beauties and seductive parts of external nature the same *cultus* which Wordsworth applied to the bare and the abstract.' His intellect, his will, his manhood, were not rugged; his two left hands could not lift the weights his father and Wordsworth bore; but they could play an accompaniment with delicate transitions in it. He knew his limitations; in this sonnet, as Bagehot says, he 'has sketched the essence of his works':

'Whither is gone the wisdom and the power,
That ancient sages scattered with the notes
Of thought-suggesting lyres? The music floats
In the void air; e'en at this breathing hour,
In every cell and every blooming bower,
The sweetness of old lays is hovering still;
But the strong soul, the self-constraining will,
The rugged root that bare the winsome flower,
Is weak and withered. Were we like the Fays
That sweetly nestle in the fox-glove bells,
Or lurk and murmur in the rose-lipped shells,
Which Neptune to the earth for quit-rent pays;
Then might our pretty modern Philomels
Sustain our spirits with their roundelays.'

He knew his limitations, and he knew his weaknesses. No better sketch could be given of his life than this, his own:

'Long time a child, and still a child when years
Had painted manhood on my cheek, was I:
For yet I lived like one not born to die,
A thriftless prodigal of smiles and tears;
No hope I needed, and I knew no fears.
But sleep, though sweet, is only sleep, and waking,
I waked to sleep no more, at once o'ertaking
The vanguard of my age, with all arrears
Of duty on my back. Nor child, nor man,
Nor youth, nor sage, I find my head is grey,
For I have lost the race I never ran;
A rathe December blights my lagging May;
And still I am a child, tho' I be old,
Time is my debtor for my years untold.'

For strength he turned to Wordsworth, who loved him very tenderly. In Dora's album Hartley wrote his tribute:

'There have been poets, that in verse display
The elemental forms of human passions
Poets have been to whom the changeful fashions
And all the wilful humours of the day
Have furnish'd matter for a polish'd lay
And many are the smooth elaborate tribe
Who emulous of thee, the shape describe
And fain would every shifting hue portray
Of restless Nature. But thou, mighty Seer,
Tis thine to celebrate the thoughts that make
The life of souls—the truths for whose sweet sake
We to ourselves, and to our God are dear.
Of Nature's inner shrine thou art the Priest,
Where most she works when we perceive her least.'

In one thing Hartley was more fortunate than Wordsworth. He was far better loved by the country folk. They had a low opinion, in general, of Wordsworth, who seemed aloof, careless, a stranger in their midst. 'Many's the time,' said an old inn-keeper whom Canon Rawnsley questioned, 'I've seed him a takin' his family out in a string, and niver geein' the deariest bit of notice to 'em; standin' by hissel' and stoppin' behind agapin', wi' his jaws workin' the whoal time; but niver no crackin' wi' 'em, nor no pleasure in 'em, —a desolate-minded man, ye kna.... It was potry as did it.' It seems that Wordsworth could rarely meet the folk on common ground. He could not break his own reserve. To them he was 'quite an object man,' meaning that he had a certain dignity; but they did not like his grave, silent way of passing children. 'As for Mister Wudsworth,' said the one-time butcher's boy, 'he'd pass you, same as if ya was nobbut a stoan. He niver cared for children, however; ya may be certain of that, for didn't I have to pass him four times in t' week, up to the door wi' meat? And he niver once said owt. Ye're well aware if he'd been fond of children he 'ud a spoke.' And of course, as for Wordsworth's 'habits, he had noan.' He neither smoked nor drank. For 'li'le Coleridge' in and out of every cottage, in and out of every pub, ever willing to share a pipe, a discussion, an opinion, or a game, they had both reverence and love. More than any undergraduates at Oxford, the dalesmen enjoyed his conversation, whether they comprehended it or not. Here ran the streams of Helicon out into the plains. 'Aye, but Mr Coleridge talks fine,' observed one. 'I would go through fire and water for Mr Coleridge,' said another.

Hartley's happiness consisted very largely in this love of simple and common people; which, for all his intentions, Wordsworth never won.

§ 10. RYDAL MOUNT AND LONDON

There are several further miscellaneous entries in 1832; one of the best is an old inscription copied from a tombstone in the churchyard of Melrose Abbey, by James Hamilton, the 'Colonel Hamilton' whom we shall presently see quoted for his opinions on America. He was staying in Ivy Cottage, now the Glen Rothay Hotel. The inscription reads:

'The earth goeth
On the earth
Glistering like
gold;
The earth goeth to
The earth sooner
than it wold;
The earth buildeth
On the earth cast-
les and towers;
The earth saith to
The earth: All shall
be ours.'

There is also a fragment by Henry Laid, signed August 6, at the Vicarage House, Great Malvern; and an undated epigram by Thomas Campbell:

'On being one of a party at Sir Thos. Lawrence's, who after shewing us his portraits sent us to an upper room to look at his grand picture of Satan.

'To shew his precious works of art
Sir Thomas was most civil
Yet strange, before he saw us part,
He sent us to the Devil—
'T. CAMPBELL.'

This was written, perhaps, during the same London visit which saw Lamb's contribution. A few months later Milton's *Sweet Echo* was copied in by G. Rigby, of Ash, Kent; and there appear two signatures which are somewhat out of keeping with the rest of the album—Talleyrand and Wellington. The latter's writing, incidentally, is very different from that of Hartley Coleridge. Henry Hallam follows them with an admonition:

'Pensi, che questo di mai non raggiorna'

and the entries then skip to Wordsworth's London visit in the early months of 1835.

But as an interlude, before skipping to London, we may give two pictures of the common round at Rydal Mount. The first item, and more important, was that the Arnolds settled at Fox How, not far from Rydal, late in September, 1832; and we have the first glimpse of their intimacy with the Wordsworths in a letter of Mrs Arnold describing a picnic in the summer of 1833:

'We had a most delightful and memorable party last Wednesday evening. It was Dora's tea-party to the children, to be given on the large island in Rydal lake; and though the children were delighted, they could not have enjoyed it more than the elder ones of the party. You must fancy Dora presiding in a sort of stone-built arch, fringed and embowered with trees, and floored with fresh moss, which

the children had plucked to form a soft carpet for our feet. Above, the blue sky seen through the trees; on one side the shrubby plants of heath and whortleberry and broom, rising, with rock scattered about, into a kind of mount; while on the other side the ground sloped down to the lake, which glittered through the trees, and gave us, as the clear waters washed up to the rocky shore, the music I most love. To complete the picture, you must fancy Mr Wordsworth stretched in the grass, and Mrs Wordsworth, with an animation and sweetness which makes her plain face so agreeable, reading to us some of his MS. poetry.'

One of the children was Matthew Arnold, then a boy of eleven.

The second picture is that of Emerson. He came to Europe in 1833 'to see the faces of three or four writers—Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, De Quincey, and the latest and strongest contributor to the critical journals, Carlyle'; he was at the time a trifle self-assured, and ready to indulge 'the saucy habit of travellers' criticism.' On the whole, though Willis had been dishonest in the mechanism of his lion-hunting, his manner was more tolerant than that of the young Emerson with his diary ready for 'a few hints of those bright personalities.' There is something annoying in his scornful utterances. Landor, he says, 'pestered me with Southey; but who is Southey?' On the receipt of this statement, when Emerson's *English Traits* was published, Landor printed in return an open *Letter to Emerson*. Had not twenty years elapsed between the observation and Landor's acquaintance with it, doubtless his answer would have been more violent. 'I am sorry,' he says, 'to have "*pestered you with Southey*," and to have

excited the enquiry, "*Who is Southey?*" I will answer the question. Southey is the poet who has written the most imaginative poem of any in our own times, English or Continental; such is the *Curse of Kehama*. Southey is the proseman who has written the purest prose; Southey is the critic the most cordial and the least invidious. Show me another, of any note, without captiousness, without arrogance, and without malignity.

"Slow rises worth by poverty deprest."

But Southey raised it.'

Emerson's shrewd judgments, his quick observations, need a little softening. Yet what he has to say is interesting. With Carlyle, he went for a walk over long hills, looked down into Wordsworth's country, 'and talked of the immortality of the soul.' Soon after,

'On the 28th August, I went to Rydal Mount, to pay my respects to Mr Wordsworth. His daughters[1] called in their father, a plain, elderly, white-haired man, not prepossessing, and disfigured by green goggles. He sat down, and talked with great simplicity. He had just returned from a journey. His health was good, but he had broken a tooth by a fall, when walking with two lawyers, and had said, that he was glad it did not happen forty years ago; whereupon they had praised his philosophy.

'He had much to say of America, the more that it gave occasion for his favourite topic,—that society is being enlightened by a superficial tuition, out of all proportion to its being restrained by moral culture. Schools do no good. Tuition is not education. He thinks more of the education of circumstances than of tuition. 'Tis not a question whether

[1] One of Dora's friends was probably staying with her at the time.

there are offences of which the law takes cognizance, but whether there are offences of which the law does not take cognizance. Sin is what he fears, and how society is to escape without gravest mischief from this source—? He has even said, what seemed a paradox, that they needed a civil war in America, to teach the necessity of knitting the social ties stronger. "There may be," he said, "in America some vulgarity in manner, but that's not important. That comes of the pioneer state of things. But I fear they are too much given to the making of money; and secondly, to politics; that they make political distinction the end, and not the means. And I fear they lack a class of men of leisure —in short, of gentlemen—to give a tone of honour to the community. I am told that things are boasted of in the second class of society there, which, in England,—God knows, are done in England every day—, but would never be spoken of. In America I wish to know not how many churches or schools, but what newspapers? My friend, Colonel Hamilton, at the foot of the hill, who was a year in America, assures me that the newspapers are atrocious, and accuse members of Congress of stealing spoons!" . . .

'Wordsworth honoured himself by his simple adherence to truth, and was very willing not to shine; but he surprised by the hard limits of his thought. To judge from a single conversation, he made the impression of a narrow and very English mind; of one who paid for his rare elevation by general tameness and conformity. Off his own beat, his opinions were of no value. It is not very rare to find persons loving sympathy and ease, who expiate their departure from the common, in one direction, by their conformity in every other.'

To turn now to the visit to London in 1835, Wordsworth stayed this time with Henry Taylor. 'This old

philosopher,' writes Taylor of his guest, 'is one of the most extraordinary human phenomena that one could have in the house. He has the simplicity and helplessness of a child in regard to the little transactions of life.... Everything that comes into his mind comes out—weakness or strength, affections or vanities.... He is very happy with us, and very social with everybody, and we have a variety of people to meet him every day at breakfast and dinner.' At a dinner party at Rogers's during this trip, Wordsworth told Thomas Moore some naïve things about himself. The tradition of the dalesmen that Wordsworth was not 'a vara conversable man' is borne out by Harriet Martineau's shrewd observation: 'His conversation can never be anticipated. Sometimes he flows on in the utmost grandeur... leaving a strong impression of inspiration. At other times we blush and are annoyed at the extremity of bad taste with which he pertinaciously dwells on the most vexatious and vulgar trifles. The first mood is all informed and actuated by knowledge of man: the other, a ludicrous proof of his want of knowledge of men.' Apparently he was in the second mood this evening. Moore notes in his 'Journal': 'In giving me an account of the sort of society he had in his neighbourhood in the country, and saying that he rarely went out to dinner, he gave a very intelligible picture of the sort of thing it must be when he *does* go out. "The conversation," he said, "may be called *catechetical*; for, as they do me the honour to wish to know my opinions on the different subjects, they ask me questions and I am induced to answer them at great length, till I become quite tired." And so he does, I'll warrant him; nor is it possible, indeed,

to edge in a word, at least in a tête-à-tête, till he *does* get tired. I was, however, very well pleased to be a listener.' In a later entry in the 'Journal,' Moore speaks again of this dinner. 'The day I met Wordsworth at dinner at Rogers' the last time I was in town, he asked us all in the evening to write something in a little album of his daughter's and Wilkie drew a slight sketch in it. . . .'

Henry Luttrell was the first, I think, to sign on this occasion; and of two fragments which he wrote, the following particularly took Moore's fancy:

'Crushed by an Omnibus—Why not?
So quick a death a boon is;
Let not his friends lament his lot
Mors Omnibus communis.'

Then Moore himself:

'Like the gale that sighs along
Beds of Oriental flowers
Is the grateful breath of song
That once was heard in happier hours.
Fill'd with balm, the gale sighs on
Though the flowers have sunk in death,
So when pleasure's dream is gone
Its memory lives in music's breath.'

In speaking of Wordsworth and Moore, the latter was not the only one who saw faults in the other. Wordsworth once remarked that 'Moore had great natural genius; but he is too lavish of brilliant ornament. His poems smell of the perfumers' and milliners' shops. He is not content with a ring and a bracelet, but he must have rings in the ears, rings in the nose—rings everywhere.' Very much a member

Glorious the names that cluster here
The loftiest of our lofty ile;
Who can approach them void of fear
Tho Genius urge. L Friendship smile

To lay one stone upon the hill
And there what I have climbd so high
Is what they bid me. Wordsworth will,
Is law, and Landor must comply.

Walter Savage Landor
May 15. Temple
1836

of the opposite camp, Wordsworth was not likely to be fond of the singer whom a contemporary described to Sydney Dobell as 'a little finikin effeminate sort of man, eye-glass in hand, up to everything, very feeble and commonplace in conversation, whom you would never suspect of writing such beautiful poetry.'

After Sir David Wilkie's sketch come Chantrey's signature and a beautifully-finished little water-colour of a Westmoreland landscape by Copley Fielding.

§ II. WORDSWORTH AND LANDOR

On the reverse of Copley Fielding's landscape is an entry over which we pause a moment:

'Glorious the names that cluster here,
The loftiest of our lofty isle;
Who can approach them void of fear,
Tho Genius urge and Friendship smile.

'To lay one stone upon the hill,
And shew that I have climbd so high,
Is what they bid me... Wordsworth's will
Is law, and Landor must comply.

'WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR,
'*Temple*,
'*May* 15, 1836.'

The story of Wordsworth's relations with Landor is complicated, and we shall have to go back in time to make it clear. The story begins with Southey and Landor, who met in Bristol early in 1808. At that time Landor had long admired Southey, and loved him as the first and only

friend of *Gebir*; Southey had long admired Landor, and loved him as the champion of *Madoc*. Their mutual praise, their 'frequently excessive self-laudations,' came, as Forster says, more from simple faith than from vanity. Their friendship was ever at flood, without an ebb. Its enthusiasm held from the beginning to the end. Landor was a stanch champion of Southey through all that estranged Southey from those with whom he had been most in sympathy; and Southey was firm in his defence of Landor, with excuses for every twinge of bitterness and folly to which Landor succumbed. Their first meeting replaced a mutual respect by warm, enduring affection. Sir Sidney Colvin says of the meeting that Southey 'had been forced of late to abandon his most cherished task, the continuance of his series of mythologic epics. The plain reason was that he could not afford to spend time on work so little remunerative. Landor, when Southey told him this, was in an instant all generosity and delicacy, begging to be allowed to print future productions of the kind at his own expense,—"as many as you will write, and as many copies as you please." In all this there was not the least taint of patronage or condescension on the part of the magnificent young squire and scholar towards the struggling, although already distinguished, man of letters, his senior by only a year. Landor was as incapable of assuming superiority on any grounds but those of character and intellect as of enduring such assumption in others. Southey, as it turned out, only made practical use of his friend's offer to the extent of allowing him to buy a considerable number of copies of *Kehama* when that work appeared. But the encouragement was

everything to him, and had for its consequences that *Kehama*, already begun and dropped, was industriously resumed and finished, and followed in due course by *Roderick*, the manuscript of either poem being dutifully sent off in successive instalments as it was written for Landor to read and criticise. At the same time an active and intimate correspondence sprung up between the two men, and in after years supplied, indeed, the chief aliment of their friendship, their meetings being from the force of circumstances rare.'

During Landor's long residence in Italy, Southey's correspondence had much to say of Wordsworth, and Landor learned to share the Laureate's admiration. The Lake school, and Landor agreed with them in this, were vehement in their denunciation of ministerial policy during the post-war period. Julius Hare, too, wrote in this strain to Landor about Wordsworth. In the summer of 1831, when Landor was planning a visit to England, Hare said:

'When Wordsworth was last with us at the end of April, I was very much grieved to find how much the state of the country and the ministerial reform-bill had preyed upon his health. Everybody said he seemed to have grown ten years older in the last three months. If the bill does all the good which its most infatuated advocates anticipate, it will hardly make amends for this evil.'

In 1835 Wordsworth still thought a revolution was at hand.

Landor's visit occurred in the summer of 1832. In May, during a three-days' stay in London, he went to see Lamb at Enfield and Coleridge at Highgate. The hour he passed

with Lamb was one 'of unalloyed enjoyment'; Coleridge, though he put on 'a bran-new suit of black' in honour of the visit, was less in sympathy with Landor. He assumed the lead in conversation, became metaphysical, and took no notice of an enthusiastic mention of Southey.

After this rapid survey of London, Landor made for the Lakes, to see Southey and Wordsworth. Forster says:

'An evening was spent in company with both, recollected afterwards for its talk of poets and poetry, wherein I remember his telling me he thought scant justice was done to Byron by his friends, and insufficient appreciation given to Scott; for that, when he had himself quoted from the latter a line about the dog of a traveller lost in the mountain snows, the comment it drew forth was a remark upon it by Wordsworth as the only good line in the piece, with the addition that the very same subject had been treated in one of his own poems, which he thereupon recited from beginning to end. I have heard him say also, that, objection having been made to an over-abundance of imagery in the prose of the *Conversations*, Wordsworth unluckily took to himself a remark made in reply, that prose will bear a great deal more of poetry than poetry will bear of prose.'

Before leaving Cumberland, they all met again at the home of Mr Rawson, of Wastwater.

Landor learned from Julius Hare that the visit had left a pleasant impression with Wordsworth. Hare stayed for some time at Rydal Mount, and wrote that 'rarely indeed in the course of life is one allowed to take such a survey of all that is lofty and all that is profound in our nature, as one obtains from living with him in his home. He has

frequently desired me to give you his kindest remembrances and the assurances of his highest regard. Your politics did *not* alarm him. He was in excellent health and spirits, and talked with all the alacrity of youth of the day you passed with him.' Southey said the visit had been as a dream, 'the pleasantest of dreams, and one that was never to be indistinctly remembered.'

Landor returned to Italy in the autumn of 1832. There is a shadow of possible disagreement in his relations with Wordsworth, but on the whole he was extremely pleased with his new friend. On his way south, from the Tyrol, he sent an ode apiece to Wordsworth and Southey. The one addressed to Wordsworth ended with a well-turned compliment:

'We both have run o'er half the space
Listed for mortals' earthly race;
We both have crost life's fervid line,
And other stars before us shine:
May they be bright and prosperous
As those that have been stars for us!
Our course by Milton's light was sped,
And Shakespeare shining overhead:
Chatting on deck was Dryden too,
The Bacon of the rhyming crew;
None ever crost our mystic sea
More richly stored with thought than he;
Tho' never tender nor sublime,
He wrestles with and conquers Time.
To learn my lore on Chaucer's knee
I left much prouder company;
Thee gentle Spenser fondly led,
But me he mostly sent to bed.

'I wish them every joy above
That highly blessed spirits prove,
Save one: and that too shall be theirs,
But after many rolling years,
When 'mid their light thy light appears.'

Wordsworth was 'extremely grateful, though he thought Southey's ode the best, and wished that, in his own, Dryden had been praised less and Spenser more.' From Florence, Landor sent some album verses for Emma Isola, to please Lamb. He sent them through Crabb Robinson. In thanking Landor for the verses to his adopted daughter, Lamb invites direct correspondence: 'that rogue Robinson detained your verses, till I call'd for them. Don't entrust a bit of prose to the rogue.' Lamb returned copies of the verses to Crabb Robinson, and with them sent copies of those printed at the beginning of this section[1]. I take it, then, that the lines for Dora's album were composed and forwarded to the Wordsworths towards the end of 1832.

Landor's next visit to London in the summer of 1836, after the break-up of his Italian home, coincided with Wordsworth's stay in town; and at the latter's request, the verses were at this time copied in the album. Ten days after the signing, both were present at the first night of Sergeant Talfourd's tragedy of *Ion*, in which Macready acted. With Crabb Robinson, they occupied a box. John Dix gives a somewhat glowing account of the effect upon the audience:

[1] As Mrs G. A. Anderson very kindly pointed out to me, this letter from Lamb to Crabb Robinson is in the Forster Collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It is dated January, 1833.

'In the next box to Joanna Baillie sat William Wordsworth, and the great poet was, of course, an object of not a little attention. As soon as he entered the house he was recognised and loudly cheered. Whether he was ignorant that the compliment was intended for him or not I cannot tell, but he did not notice it. He leaned over and shook hands with Joanna, and then sat down, removing his green spectacles, and leaning his thoughtful looking head on his hand, gazed round the house, nodding to one and another as he recognised them. I always thought that Wordsworth's face had much of sadness in its expression, and this struck me very forcibly on the night in question. He looked more like a man borne down by some heavy grief than a profound thinker. His smile, when he chanced to greet any acquaintance, was a solemn affair, and it speedily vanished as if the effort to display it, if but for a moment, was too painful for long continuance. On my mentioning this circumstance to Mrs Sigourney, the American poetess, she said that she had remarked the same "sad look" even when surrounded by his own family.

'But despite this, who could look at the Bard of Rydal, and not feel a flush of pride, and a glow of satisfaction, that he was in the presence of one of Nature's High Priests? During the whole of the tragedy, and on that first night it occupied nearly five hours in the performance, Wordsworth did not leave his seat, and frequently paid a tribute of admiration to his brother poet by applauding portions of the piece. Indeed, he thumped with his stick most lustily, and if Talfourd saw him he must have been not a little gratified by *such* approvals of his tragedy.'

After the performance the three went to the reception at Talfourd's house. The party was large and enthusiastic; but Southey's absence, owing to sorrow at Keswick, was

lamented by all. In the miscellaneous conversation, though to others Landor and Wordsworth seemed to be well pleased with one another, seeds were being sown for future strife. Landor, extraordinary mixture of 'ardent enthusiasm and lofty scorn,' was eager to talk about Southey, and was flushed with praise of *Ion*; Wordsworth, whose spirits sometimes cooled with the lateness of the hour, and who in general maintained what Carlyle called 'a rock-like indifference to the battle,' was judged a dissenting spirit on both subjects by the precision, rather than eloquence, of his remarks. In thinking over Wordsworth's conversation, very likely in talking about him after the elder poet left, Landor began to let certain antipathies come uppermost within his memory. He objected to the rigid boundaries in Wordsworth's intellectual sympathies; and, more than anything else, he resented with a sudden blaze of anger the saying, which he says Wordsworth uttered, that he 'would not give five shillings for all Southey's poetry.' The satire in which he eased his anger and his mood of personal animosity was a great shock to Crabb Robinson, who had no suspicions of trouble. He remonstrated vigorously with Landor over the outburst. 'What matters it,' said the mutual friend, 'that he is insensible to the astonishing powers of Voltaire or Goethe? He is, after all, Wordsworth. In all cases I care little what a man is *not*; I look to what he *is*. And Wordsworth has written a hundred poems the least excellent of which I would not sacrifice to give him that openness of heart you require. Productive power acts by means of concentration. With few exceptions those only love everything who, like me, can themselves do nothing.'

'Perhaps I was too ill-humoured,' Landor confessed long afterwards to Emerson, 'but my spirit rose against his ingratitude toward the man who first, and with incessant effort and great difficulty, brought him into notice. He ought to have approached his poetical benefactor as he did the

"illustrious peer,
With high respect and gratitude sincere."

Southey would have been more pleased by the friendliness of the sentiment than by the intensity of the poetry in which it is expressed; for Southey was the most equitable, the most candid, the most indulgent of mankind.'

The incident ruffled Wordsworth little at the time, but it was the beginning of a slowly widening breach which never healed. Landor's 'for ever,' as Sir Sidney Colvin gently points out, 'rarely lasted more than a few weeks. With Wordsworth, however, such matters had a trick of intensifying themselves as he looked back upon them; and in regard to a later controversy between Quillinan and Landor, Wordsworth talked and wrote in a tone of acrimony which is best forgotten.

Landor, in some critical verses written in hexameters at the request of Julius Hare, made his final estimate of Wordsworth after the latter's death:

'Wordsworth, well pleas'd with himself, cared little for modern or ancient,
His was the moor and the tarn, the recess in the mountain, the woodland.
Scatter'd with trees far and wide, trees never too solemn or lofty,

Never entangled with plants over-running the villager's
foot path.
Equable was he and plain; and tho' wandering a little in
wisdom,
Ever was English at heart. If his words were too many;
if Fancy's
Furniture lookt rather scant in a whitewashed and homely
apartment;
If in his rural designs there is sameness and tameness; if
often
Feebleness is there for breath; if his pencil wants rounding
and pointing;
Few of this age or the last stand out on the like elevation.
There is a sheepfold he rais'd which my memory loves to
revisit,
Sheepfold whose wall shall endure when there is not a
stone of the palace.'

§ 12. EDWARD QUILLINAN

We have now to skip the years more rapidly and to resume a thread broken by many intervening entries in Dora's album. In 1828, to recapitulate, Quillinan spoke for Dora. He was the favoured suitor out of several; and Wordsworth, who had the deciding vote, and whose will was law far more in his own household than it was for Landor, had for Quillinan a real affection. 'I am not surprised,' Wordsworth wrote in 1830 to G. Huntley Gordon, 'that you are so well pleased with Mr Quillinan. The more you see of him the better you will like him.' That time, as we have noted before, found Dora 'as happy as a lark.' Yet there was, to Wordsworth, reason for delay. Quillinan was a Catholic, and a widower. Though these

were no objections in a friend, they raised questions in respect to a son-in-law. But the main point was that in spite of a general approval, and in spite of his hopes for Dora's happiness, Wordsworth loved her with double intensity, and could not bring himself to let her go. Long before the chance had offered, Wordsworth wrote about the lover that he would advise. When that lover came, the poet shrank back frightened. In 1816 he could say:

> 'though Time,
> The Conqueror, crowns the Conquered, on this brow
> Planting his favourite silver diadem,
> Nor he, nor minister of his—intent
> To run before him—hath enrolled me yet,
> Though not unmenaced, among those who lean
> Upon a living staff, with borrowed sight. . . ."

Now he was far more in the position he had feared; and the largest part of his opposition came from the feeling that he could not cut himself loose from his 'living staff.' Both Quillinan and Dora respected his desire—indeed, his necessity—but the situation did not make for happiness. While her lover went abroad and lived for some years restlessly, Dora stayed at home and performed duties of which we have had some glimpse. One of the important affairs of her life was to make the long evenings pass, by her own cheerful self-denial. As for amusing himself, Wordsworth, in De Quincey's phrase, was 'gloomily unfitted for bending to such a yoke.' Many years before, in a period of depression as a young man, when his income was precisely nil and he seemed destined to starvation for refusing to forsake his high ideals, his friends had played cards with

him to distract his real distress; '*cards*,' cries De Quincey, 'which, in any part of the thirty-and-one years since *I* have known Wordsworth, could have had as little power to interest him, or to cheat him of sorrow, as marbles or a top.' Neither cards nor any other form of self-entertainment could now distract his long periods of restlessness and tedium. His only method was to rely on others. Coleridge does not compare so badly. Better opium, perhaps, than to have no pleasant vices.

The separation did not agree with either of the younger generation, whose best years seemed to pass more rapidly than Wordsworth's worst ones. Samuel Rogers visited Rydal in August, 1834; in writing to his sister he remarks, 'As for the Wordsworths, they have an affliction I was not aware of at first. Their daughter Dora looks cheerful before other people, but is in a sad, melancholy way and eats nothing, says nothing, and goes nowhere. They are very wretched about her.' She may have felt herself compelled to tread upon her own hopes, even to indicate their death to Quillinan. She is restrained, almost cold, in writing to him in Portugal at Christmas time in 1834. The general depression that Rogers noticed is at this time echoed in a letter to Crabb Robinson, in which the Wordsworths all plead for the lively barrister to come to them for Christmas and to cheer them up.

It is surprising that the warm-hearted Robinson's initials are not in Dora's album, for he was one of the Wordsworths' truest friends. While appreciative of the poet's powers, the barrister was aware of certain limitations, and not afraid to differ or to give him sound advice. It says

something for his tact that the mutual affection never wavered. The Christmas visits, becoming annual affairs, were a great service to Rydal Mount. They would last perhaps six weeks, Robinson living in a cottage just below the Mount—he insisted upon lodgings, that he might have his breakfasts and milk suppers under an independent roof. He was looked upon as one of the family, and on arrival always found a fire burning comfortably in his lodgings, with tea and sugar carefully provided by Mrs Wordsworth. He would then proceed up the hill with various schemes for interesting Wordsworth, and the whole family loved his buoyant spirits. 'No Crabb, no Christmas!' Quillinan used to say some years later. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Crabb Robinson were all lengthy talkers, and all a bit prone to monopoly—each in a kindly way accusing the others of his own vice, as when Robinson spoke of Coleridge's 'innings-for-one that he called conversation.' But Wordsworth was fond of listening when Robinson talked; and always paid attention to the man

> 'of cheerful yesterdays
> And confident to-morrows; with a face
> Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much
> Of Nature's impress—gaiety and health,
> Freedom and hope; but keen withal, and shrewd.'

One of Crabb Robinson's schemes for Wordsworth was a tour on the Continent in 1836. They got as far as London, but at the last moment Wordsworth begged off. He felt he could not, at sixty-seven, risk a long absence from his home. But though he returned to Rydal in July of that year, he did not abandon the idea of Italy altogether, and

deferred the arrangement of the trip until the next spring. Robinson was patient, even long-suffering, in complying with Wordsworth's indecisive utterances, now indicating that the trip was on, now off. Finally, in 1837, after eight months' strenuous work for the whole household in correcting the proofs for the 5th edition of the collected poems —for the amount of labour falling upon Mrs Wordsworth and Dora, Wordsworth apologises in a letter from Salzburg —the two started. They left on March 19, and arrived again at London on August 7. Dora had been spending some time at Dover with Miss Fenwick, and seems to have met her father on his return—perhaps with Christopher Wordsworth, for he signs an entry in her album on August 6. Dora may have gone with Wordsworth to visit Mary Lamb on September 7; at any rate she was with him at Brinsop Court later in the month.

In the meanwhile, there is news of Edward Quillinan. In 1832 he had given up his house in Bryanston Street, and gone to France, living partly in Paris and partly in Boulogne, till 1834. He had then gone to Portugal, returning to England at the end of 1835, and remained in London till November, 1836, when he took his daughter Jemima to Oporto and stayed there a year. From one of Mrs Wordsworth's letters to Crabb Robinson we know that Quillinan was at the Lakes before his departure in 1836; during that bad time when Sarah Hutchinson's death added to their troubles, Mrs Wordsworth says 'his presence was a god-send to me.' And towards the close of 1837 Wordsworth speaks of his return, writing from Brinsop Court on September 20:

'We are heartily glad to learn from your letter, just received, that, in all probability, by this time you must have left the unhappy country in which you have been so long residing....'

[He goes on to mention] 'an unexpected attack of my old complaint of inflammation in the eye; and in consequence of this, Dora will accompany me home, with a promise on her part of returning to London before the month of October is out. Our places are taken in to-morrow's coach for Liverpool; so that, since we must be disappointed of seeing you and Jemima here, we trust that you will come on to Rydal from Leeds. This very day Dora had read to me your poem again: it convinces me, along with your other writings, that it is in your power to attain a permanent place among the poets of England. Your thoughts, feelings, knowledge, and judgment in style, and skill in metre, entitle you to it; and if you have not yet succeeded in gaining it, the cause appears to me merely to lie in the subjects which you have chosen.... I ought, however, in justice to you, to add, that one cause of your failure appears to have been thinking too humbly of yourself, so that you have not reckoned it worth while to look sufficiently around you for the best subjects, or to employ as much time in reflecting, condensing, bringing out and placing your thoughts and feelings in the best point of view as is necessary. I will conclude this matter of poetry and my part of the letter, with requesting that, as an act of friendship, at your convenience, you would take the trouble—a considerable one, I own—of comparing the corrections in my last edition with the text in the preceding one. You know my principles of style better, I think, than anyone else; and I should be glad to learn if anything strikes you as being altered for the worse. You will find the principal changes are in *The White Doe*, in which I had too little of the benefit of your help

and judgment. There are several also in the Sonnets both miscellaneous and political; in the other poems they are nothing like so numerous; but here also I should be glad if you would take the like trouble. Jemima, I am sure will be pleased to assist you in the comparison, by reading new or old, as you may think fit. . . .'

I do not know the text of Dora's companion note to this request, but contact was established once again. Quillinan went to live at Canterbury, but was often in town, and Dora that winter saw something of him during her stay in the south. At Christmas time I think he was at Rydal, as was Crabb Robinson; in 1838 we catch a glimpse of him in Kent—he puts a pencil sketch of Barfreston Church in the album in November.

To get to that we had to skip many names. There is John Wilson, perhaps better known as 'Christopher North'; also Charles Townsend, and James Montgomery[1]. Christopher Wordsworth, who carefully inserted with his contribution a sprig of thyme from Hymettus, we have mentioned; and 'Barry Cornwall'—B. W. Proctor—wrote as follows:

'The Love of parents hath a deep still source,
And falleth like a flood upon their child:
Sometimes the child is grateful; then *his* love
Comes like the spray returning.

'*26 Sept.* 1837, 'BARRY CORNWALL,
'London.'

[1] One of the few references to the album occurs in a letter from Wordsworth to Montgomery, where he mentions 'the little book belonging to my daughter, which you have been so good as to enrich with a most valuable contribution. . . received yesterday at Rydal Mount.' *Letters of the Wordsworth Family*, vol. III. 116.

From an unfinished Poem.

Parents,
~~Fathers~~ beside their infants' beds, are gods;
They do them good, awaking or asleep,
Ere the small mortals knows them. Who can tell,
That spirits Divine stoop not in fatty thus
Over the ~~fathers~~ parents too, in their distress,
Their children grey; and not of struggling dreams
Make them to some sweet face of hope & joy,
Some re-assurance of regarding heaven?

Leigh Hunt.
Dec. 15. 1837.

With best respects to their Hindoostanee from Mr L. H. who has ventured to steal a couple of blank leaves out of the book, in the hope of some day sending her some verses written expressly for the daughter of the great poet.

There is a slight difficulty about the date, in that the Wordsworths seem to have returned to Rydal by the 26th; but the book may have been sent after Dora, as it was in the case of the next contribution.

'From an unfinished Poem.

'Parents, beside their infants beds, are gods:
They do them good, awaking or asleep,
Ere the small mortals know them. Who can tell,
That spirits divine stoop not in pity thus
Over the parents too, in their distress,
Their children grey; and out of struggling dreams
Wake them to some sweet face of hope and joy,
Some re-assurance of regarding heaven?

'*Dec.* 15, 1837.' 'LEIGH HUNT.

Underneath this is written:

'With best respects to Miss Wordsworth from Mr L. H. who has ventured to steal a couple of blank leaves out of the book, in the hope of some day sending her some verses written expressly for the daughter of the great poet.'

In his *Autobiography* Leigh Hunt has left a record of his recollection of Wordsworth, when the latter called upon him in 1815. At that time Leigh Hunt had exchanged his 'bower of roses' in prison for what he calls a 'box of lilies' in the Edgeware Road; in plainer language, he had then 'a little study overlooking the fields,' a room 'draperied with white and green, having furniture to match,' in which his wife's cousin extinguished him one morning when his dressing-gown had caught fire. Here Wordsworth turned up unexpectedly, to thank Leigh Hunt for the zeal shown in advocating his genius. Wordsworth had then a dignified

manner, with a deep and roguish but not unpleasing voice, and an exalted mode of speaking; and sat for some time dealing forth 'eloquent but hardly catholic judgments.' 'In his father's house,' Leigh Hunt remarked, 'were not many mansions.' In 1837, when they met again and the album was presented, Leigh Hunt thought Wordsworth's bearing improved, 'natural and noble, with a cheerful air of animal as well as spiritual confidence.' He no longer committed scornful criticisms. He had found that he could afford to be silent.

The blank pages mentioned by Leigh Hunt are gone, taken from a centre section, where the loss would not be noticed. This suggests a further, curious question. There are two pages missing elsewhere from the album. A leaf between John Wilson's contribution and that of Charles Townsend has been cut out as if with sewing scissors; the fragment remaining bears some scratches of small, fine writing. It is conceivable that it was an entry of De Quincey's, but there is no shadow of proof; among other possibilities are Charlotte Brontë and Harriet Martineau. The other missing page, which came later, bore a sketch; this was at first pasted down to the preceding page, and afterwards cut out.

After Leigh Hunt comes Cary:

> 'And blest is he, who most of beauty feels
> And most of love, in nature, art, or life:
> To whom the murkiest cloud is but a strife
> Harmonious, that with Rembrandt touch reveals
> Intenser brightness.
>
> 'H. F. CARY,
>
> '*Jany.* 11th, 1838.'

Wordsworth, who did not like Leigh Hunt, thought Cary's translation of Dante a work of great national importance. Following upon these come two scientific names, William Whewell and Mary Somerville; and then a series of sketches by Calcott, Boxall and E. C. Baker, at the end of which is the sketch of Barfreston Church by 'E. Q.' mentioned above.

If we are right about the identity of the 'unknown Wight' in 1831, Quillinan appears in the album three times. The following is the last of the three and, with its connotations, the prettiest in the book.

'To D. W——.

'*The Railroad Mail-Coach.*

'Blest days of steam! No Phaeton need
Now mount Apollo's flying waggon;
No Poet wants a wingéd steed
Since Man has tamed the fiery Dragon.

'Now Cupid, should his wings be clipt,
May laugh at Wisdom's best endeavour;
Of every volant feather stript
He still may fly as fast as ever:

'And Venus may dismiss her doves,
And yoke the Dragon to her car:
And vainly now to him who loves
Shall distance interpose a bar.

'Shy northern Maid! The laurelled copse
Of Rydal now is no retreat;
Up goes a silver cloud, and drops
Your southern lover at your feet.

'Rydal Mount, 'E. Q.
'*February*, 1839.'

Besides appearing on a left-hand page early in the book—out of place as regards the date—these verses come at the very end of the collection, written in pencil because composed, perhaps, in Dora's company. There are two minor corrections in the copied version, and the signature, as subscribed to the original in pencil, is erased. Quillinan's touch in verse is a pretty one; the sentiments of a lover at the novelty of railways differ somewhat from Wordsworth's own outraged feelings; and I cannot read the above without smiling at the comparison with the latter's voice, uplifted into capitals, with scarcely suppressed anguish—

'Hear YE that Whistle?'

Perhaps Dora did not protest so vigorously 'against the wrong.'

About this time the question of the marriage was once more pressed; and Wordsworth, as if goaded into despair, began to move restlessly about the country. At the beginning of April he was at Bath; towards the end of the month he went to Brinsop. The following letter, post-marked 'Woburn, April 27, 1839,' seems to have been posted *en route*:

'My dear Daughter,

'The letter which you must have received from William has placed before you my judgment and feelings; how far you are reconciled to them I am unable to divine; I have only to add, that I believe Mr Q. to be a most honourable and upright man; and further that he is most strongly and faithfully attached to you—this I must solemnly declare in justice to you both; and to this I add, *my blessing upon you and him*; more I cannot do—and if this

does not content you, with what your brother has said, we must all abide by God's decision upon our respective fates. Mr Q. is, I trust, aware how slender my means are; the state of William's health will undoubtedly entail upon us considerable expense, and how John is to get on without our aid I cannot foresee. No more at present—my time is out; I am going to join Miss Fenwick at Miss Pollards.

'Ever your most tender-hearted and affectionate Father

'WM. WORDSWORTH.

'In a beautiful churchyard near Bath I saw the other day this inscription:

Thomas Carrol Esq[r].
Barrister at Law
Born – so –. Died – so –.
"Rest in Peace, dear Father."

There was not another word.'

To this Mrs Wordsworth adds the note that she 'will write from Brinsop.' I should perhaps include here another letter on the same subject. The date is difficult to determine; it was written apparently from London:

'My dearest Dora, 'Sunday Morning, 9 o'clock.

'I am looking for Mr Quillinan every moment. I hope to revive the conversation of yesterday.

'The sum is: I make no opposition to this marriage. I have no resentment connected with it toward any one. You know how much friendship I have always felt towards Mr Q., and how much I respect him. I do not doubt the strength of his love and affection towards you; this, as far as I am concerned, is the fair side of the case.

'On the other hand, I cannot think of parting with you

with that complacency, that satisfaction, that hopefulness which I could wish to feel; there is too much of necessity in the case for my wishes. But I must submit, and do submit; and God Almighty bless you, my dear child, and him who is the object of your long and long-tried preference and choice.

'Ever your affectionate Father,

'WM. WORDSWORTH.'

But once more the marriage was postponed, though Dora and Quillinan are seen more often in each other's society. Early in 1840 Dora seems to have been in London. There are two further letters which should come here. The business in the first refers to the Copyright Act, which called forth two open letters from Wordsworth in 1838; the Chaucer specimens appeared in 1841:

'Rydal Mount,

'*March* 9th, 1840[1].

'We have to thank you, my dear Mr Quillinan, for two long letters, both of which were very acceptable and interesting. I will first touch upon the points of business by noticing the information you have procured about modelling which seems sufficient for fulfillment of my promise to the person at Keswick.... I do not acknowledge the force of the objections made to my publishing the specimen of Chaucer; nevertheless, I have yielded to the judgments of others and have not sent more than the Cuckoo and Nightingale. You noticed properly Balfour's *blunder*, if it be not a misprint. Tegg is what you say; he has written two long and stupid letters to the "Times," in one of which the Blockhead says "look at the profits," the enormous ones

[1] This is the date of the original, in the possession of Mr Wise. Knight suggests the year should be 1841.

of such and such people. Now that is so far from being an objection to the Bill, that is one of the strongest reasons in favour of it. The large and increasing demand for literature of a certain quality, holds out the strongest temptation to men, who could do better, writing below themselves, to suit the taste of the superficial many. What we want is not books to catch purchasers themselves not worth a moment's notice, not light but solid matter, not things treated in a broad and coarse or at best a superficial way, but profound and refined, works comprehensive of human interests through time as well as space. Kotzebue was acted and read at once from Cadiz to Moscow; what is become of him now? But Tegg has the impudence to affirm: that another Paradise Lost or a poem as good, would at once produce 10,000 from Mr Murray and others. "Credat Judaeus Apella." Paradise Lost is indeed bought, because people for their own credit must now have it. But how few, how very few read it; when it is read by the multitude it is almost exclusively not as a poem, but a religious book. But even were it true, that substantial work would at once secure a wide circulation, justice would still be violated, by withholding from the descendants or heirs of a great author the further advantage he is so strongly entitled to. The wretch Tegg, says "his" *line* is to watch expiring copyrights, and would be, no doubt, if he dared, to murder the authors for the sake of getting sooner at his prey.

'But too much of this disgusting subject. We have and have had for the last three weeks through the whole day, celestial weather and the stars by night brilliant almost as in the West Indies. For the two or three last days there has been a sort of steaming heat, as in summer, especially towards sunset, but it goes off and the nights are clear as I have described. I disturb myself by thinking that Dora

might have escaped her terrible cold if she had remained here; but she has had what she deems a more than sufficient set off in her enjoyment of your company, and that of her other friends. I cannot however altogether forgive dear Sara Coleridge being such a monopolist of your conversation in Dora's presence. It was to say the least indelicate; but blue-stockingism is sadly at enmity with true refinement of mind.... I have written a long letter to Dora this morning, and my back aches with stooping in this way which I am so little accustomed to....'

On his seventieth birthday (7th April, 1840), Wordsworth writes to Dora as follows:

'My dearest Dora,

'Though my left eye has been rather troublesome these two or three last days, I cannot forbear writing to you, and let the letter serve for dear Miss Fenwick also. Upon the morning of my seventieth birthday, I am, thank Almighty God! in excellent health, and so is your dear Mother, and though some of my thoughts upon this occasion are naturally serious, even to sadness, I am upon the whole in a cheerful state of mind.

'The day is bright as sunshine can make it, and the air fraught with as much stir and animating noise as the wind can put into it. Your Mother finds her ancles weak from the shock and sprain of her fall and consequent confinement, or I should have tempted her out to walk with me on the terrace, from which I have had an entertaining view of the merriment of the servants, with help from Arthur Jackson and his brother, shaking the glittering dust out of the carpets.

'Sister is very comfortable, and we are going on nicely, though wishing much for your return.

'Yesterday I dined with Mrs Luff, after calling at the

house high up Loughrigg Fell, where dwells the good woman who lost her two children in the flood last winter. The wind was high when I knocked at her door, and I heard a voice from within, that I knew not what to make of, though it sounded something like the lullaby of a Mother to her baby. Upon entering I found it came from a little sister of those drowned children, that was singing to a bundle of clouts rudely put together to look like a doll, which she held in her arms.

'I tell you this little story in order that, if it be perfectly convenient, but on no account else, you may purchase a thing that may answer the purpose with something more of pride and pleasure to this youngling of a nurse. Such is your Mother's wish, I should not have had the wit to think of it. No matter, she says, how common a sort of thing the doll is, only let it be a good big one. . . .'

Quillinan accompanied the Wordsworths on the Duddon tour during that summer, and was generous and capable in making the arrangements and taking off the women's hands the details Wordsworth always left to them. In August, at the Lakes, we have a picture of an excursion up Helvellyn. Dora 'was on horseback, and rode up to the top of the hill without once dismounting, a feat which it was scarcely possible to perform except during a season of dry weather; and a guide, with whom we fell in on the mountain, told us he believed it had never been accomplished before by anyone.' Quillinan's poem, the *Address to a Pony*, was written on this occasion; it begins:

'Climb pigmy steed! strain up each rocky ledge!'

And, at last, in 1841, we have news which comes almost

unexpectedly after the long delay. Wordsworth writes from Bath on May 11:

'This morning my dear daughter was married in St James' in this place....'

§ 13. ORDERED SOUTH

When she became Mrs Quillinan, Dora was thirty-seven, and Quillinan fifty. The pair accompanied the Wordsworths to Wells and to some of the old haunts in Somerset, then set off to live by themselves in Canterbury. There or in London they lived till the winter of 1842–43, when they moved to Ambleside. The summers of 1843 and 1844 were spent on the island on Windermere. Quillinan writes to Miss Fenwick in August, 1843: 'This island-home is the most delightful residence in the world.... With sunny days and serene moonlights, we have lived quite as much on the water as on the shore, gliding about the islands as familiarly by night as by day.' In 1844 Quillinan continues to praise it to Crabb Robinson: 'What a heavenly-earthly season it is! It is enough to live and breathe such air; see such flowers, such stars, such moonlight, such variety of vegetation, and vapour and shadow on lake and mountain, and to hear such joyous carolling from every bush.' But the weather was not always so mild, and in the winters Dora's complaint returned, with increasing severity. All were seriously alarmed at the beginning of 1845, and by the spring of that year a change of climate became imperative. Unwilling plans were therefore

made for residence in Portugal. The two bade farewell to the Lakes in April, and together with Jemima, Quillinan set sail for Oporto at the beginning of May.

During the journey and their residence abroad Dora sent a series of journal letters to Rydal Mount. These she later revised and published, and we may insert some extracts. Shortly after their arrival she describes the Portuguese *festas*, ending with some remarks on the Southerners' love of pyrotechnics:

'But, perhaps, of all entertainments, fireworks most delight the boys and young men. On one festival eve we heard rockets rapping off incessantly all around us. That same night a certain fashionable and wealthy tailor of Oporto was not content with illuminating his house brilliantly and sending his rockets up into the air, but he must send them down into the street too, to see, for the fun of the thing, the consternation they would cause among the passers-by; and a rocket actually set fire to a lady's petticoat as she was walking home from the opera. Happily no serious injury was sustained, the alarm, and the destruction of the dress proving the worst of it. It is quite unsafe to ride about the streets at these *festa* seasons. Mr Quillinan[1] was on a spirited horse, going leisurely up one of the narrowest streets of the city about 3 p.m., the day very hot and therefore he was holding up an umbrella to ward off the sun, when, without the slightest warning, out rushes a little urchin from a gateway, and lets off a rocket right in the face of the horse, which of course bolted round, and it was little less than a miracle how our friend escaped being crushed against one side of the street or the

[1] Where names are left blank in the journal as published, I have supplied them.

other, the space that the horse had for turning being so confined.'

There follows a picture in which a rocket figures more pleasantly:

'It was at night; the signal gun of our English steamer roused me from a deep sleep. I got up; opened the shutters. A full moon was shining brilliantly; the white breakers of the bar were as visible as they were audible; beyond the bar, southwards, the sea was a plain of burnished—not gold, nor yet silver, but something between—which now glistened, now glittered, as the waves rolled gently along. To the north all seemed wrapped in gloom; but in that direction my heart lay. I again looked anxiously into the deep gloom, and a heave of some friendly wave brought into view a galaxy of bright stars floating upon the waters: it was as if a constellation had come down from the heavens to rest upon these waters. These were lights from the steamer. I watched her long—now in sight, now out of sight, now one twinkling star, then again the whole constellation; and so it continued for, perhaps, half an hour; when, from a point midway between the vessel and the shore, and where before I had not distinguished aught upon the water, rose up as by enchantment a pillar of fire, which, after ascending to an immense height, made a graceful curve, broke, and fell—not noiselessly—into the sea. This was a rocket from the pilot's boat, on its return to land; a signal that all was right, and that the steamer might pursue her way, which she instantly did, as I suppose, for not another star twinkled from the water's breast. The light of the moon was so strong as to enable me to espy the brave little pilot boat, as she recrossed the white breakers of the bar—a black speck tossed to and fro like a broken plank. What a spot is this Foz for moon-risings and settings and

shinings, and for sunsets. Well may the Portuguese have a tradition that Noah came to Portugal purposely to see a sunset!...'

They lived for six months at the Foz, spending much of their time out of doors, and taking daily rides. The best of these are recorded with quick eye and graceful pen. One of the favourite rides was along the lower road to Oporto, by Lordello:

'It runs parallel with the river, and close to it on the right bank; rows of trees on each side, graceful stone fountains, shaded by trees—generally weeping willows. About these fountains are women and children filling their pitchers. At the tank below are the *Lavendeiras* washing linen, rubbing and beating its *life* out on the hard stones, and singing merrily in concert as they pursue their humble calling. On the road men and boys are driving carts drawn by two or more oxen, the heavy wooden wheels creaking most horribly as they slowly revolve with the lumbering axle-tree. "The long dry see-saw of an ass's bray" is melodious in comparison. Picturesque figures are forever passing to and from the city; fish girls, fruit girls (their pretty baskets always on their heads) tripping along with a gay, light step, and hearts as light, if we may judge from their bright looks and joyous voices, and the cheerful greetings they gave us as we met. Groups of fishermen are spreading out their nets to dry, or sitting on the ground before their cottage doors, in the full sunshine, mending them; little children darting in and out of these same doors like rabbits—and often more like the rabbits' enemy than the rabbit—racing across the road, without a rag of covering, to plunge headlong into the water from a considerable height, and there to play for the hour like so many water-

spaniels. They rejoice in this sport most when the tide is coming in great strength; and what roars of laughter burst from these little fellows when half a dozen of them get knocked down by a great wave, which carries them, in spite of their puny resistance, high up on the shore and leaves them there, sprawling on the sand, till a second wave comes to make yet more sport.'

After a description of Portuguese beggars, Dora goes on to say that the more intelligent and imitative of the animals follow the human examples. Her begging-pig is attractive; he was 'a very pretty pig,' she remarks, with a 'quaint Chinese' expression:

'Swine are pets, and cunningly knowing pets in Portugal. Ours was a pretty, round, plump, short-legged little fellow, who used to come grunting first at the outer door; if not attended to there, he walked forward, and grunted for some time in the hall, and if no notice was then taken of him, he would mount two or three of the steps, and there squeal and squeak until we went to him, and he would not quit the place until something was given to him. Piggy was an epicure: he evidently preferred the sweet melon to the water-melon; but the seeds of the water-melon were what he liked best of all the delicacies we hunted up for him, unless it were sweet chestnuts; apples, too, he was very fond of, and figs if they were ripe and good. He knew our voices perfectly, and whenever he heard Mr Quillinan talking in the streets, and at a considerable distance too, he would come running to him, and he was unwilling to leave him until his back had been gently rubbed with the foot or the walking-stick; he gave a sort of grunt of thanks, "while joyfully twinkled his tail," and then he contentedly withdrew.'

Occasionally she sketches the country-side, as in the following extract:

'We were fording the stream that runs through the valley of Campanha. A blind man was feeling his way with a long stick over a simple stone bridge, hardly a bridge, for it was only a succession of long and very narrow slabs supported by upright stones, with no fence whatever. Under this bridge, growing on the river's brim, we spied a bunch of primroses reflecting itself in the glassy pool below, which was not ruffled by two tiny waterfalls that leaped down the bank from the field above, and between which falls the primrose grew. This was a pretty foreground to a middle distance of green meadows with rising ground beyond, on the most elevated point of which stood the fine old church, neighboured by a large and handsome building formerly a convent, round which the village gathered, its lowly roofs peeping out from among the orange-trees that sheltered them from sun and storm. The village was backed with pine-woods stretching away to the blue hills that rose range above range in the far distance.'

During the summer they set out to explore the province *Entre Douro e Minho*, one of the smallest, most populous, and most interesting in Portugal. The party was on horseback, with Quillinan in the lead. 'Leave all your bandboxes at home,' he commanded, 'and take nothing that you can do without: economy is the life of the army.' There were no adventures, but a number of small incidents that were amusing to recall. Occasionally there was trouble with an unruly mule—'a lady of capricious disposition, and sometimes downright termagant'—whose chief delight was depositing her muleteer on the ground. This frightened Jemima, 'who is not very courageous';

but was a matter of pleasantry for the others, especially on the occasions when 'the *arriero* had fallen on his head and was uninjured.'

Dora, be it remarked, had a wider sense of humour than her father or her aunt. By instinct Wordsworth was solemn, Dorothy naïve. A letter from Coleridge to Miss Scott, dated August 26, 1833, bears upon Dorothy's charming simplicity as it appeared to a more subtle story-teller. The letter, with its page of delicious humour, rests at present in the Fitzwilliam Museum, and the authorities of Jesus College are generous in allowing me to quote:

'Once, she being present, I told one of these good stories, the main drollery of which rests upon their utter *unbelievability* as actual fact, viz.—of a Surgeon, who having restored to life two or three persons who had attempted to hang or drown themselves; and having been afterwards importuned by them for help and maintenance on the plea, that having forced life upon them against their own will and wish, he was bound to support it; had resolved, that he would never interfere in any such accidents, without having first ascertained whether the individual wished it or no.

'On a summer day, while on a water-party, one of the Rowers in some unaccountable way fell overboard and disappeared. But on his re-emergence the Surgeon caught hold of his hair and lifting his head and chest above the water said—"Now, my good Fellow! did you really mean to drown yourself? What is your own wish?"—"O, O, O," sobbed out the man, "A sickly wife and seven small children . . ."—"Ha! *poor* Fellow! No wonder then!" exclaimed the Surgeon, and instantly popped him under again.

'The party were all on the brink of a loud laugh, when Dorothy Wordsworth, with tears sparkling in her eyes,

cried out, "Bless me! but was not that very *inhuman*!" This stroke of exquisite simplicity and true singleness of heart, made us almost roll off our chairs; but was there one of the party, that did not love Dorothy the more for it? I trust, not one.'

To return to the explorations in Portugal as reported by Dora's pen, the party wandered slowly and contentedly for some weeks. The chief discomfort was that indicated in the following sentence about sleeping accommodations:

'Mr Quillinan had not been long in bed before he became aware that he was self-sacrificed to the little black skipping demon whose name is Legion.'

Such troubles were forgotten in the day-time, whenever Quillinan came to a river that looked as if it should be full of trout. Then, as Dora remarks on one occasion, he

'employed himself for two hours in tempting them to "come and be killed"; but the trout, if there were any, did not understand London-made flies, and we had the pleasure of laughing at him for his want of skill, at which he was rather piqued—exactly what we meant him to be; but the moment he found that out he spoiled the joke by joining in the laugh, and putting up his reel and rod.'

They returned to the Foz, stayed there till November, and were then driven by the weather to Oporto. She writes:

'Oporto is a most interesting and entertaining town for an English stranger to explore, and I believe we poked into every square, large and small, every street, every lane, where a horse could go; and certainly we carried into these places even more wonder and amusement than we brought out.

To see a lady on horseback, riding in English fashion, and in English riding costume, in itself creates what the French call sensation; but to see her in such out-of-the-way corners, the wonder was tenfold, and comical were the remarks we used to overhear, both in the town and country. I was once requested to spare a piece of my "vestido" to make a coat of; another time, I was politely told I was dressed in man's attire; another time a little urchin ran after me, crying out, "Que diablo" of a long gown!'

She describes the embarrassing punctilio of calls and visits which occupied part of their time during the winter; in the spring they went again to the Foz, to embark for Lisbon; of the trip in Spain we need say little. Her pen runs lightly over Cintra, Cadiz, Seville, Barcelona; though delighted with them, she is evidently anxious to be home again. From Marseilles they headed north and were back in England by the middle of July, 1846. They lived then at Loughrigg Holm, Dora there preparing her journal for the press. The dedication was:

'These notes are dedicated in all reverence and love to my Father and Mother, for whom they were written.'

But the return, however longed-for, was ill-advised. Dora's enemy was tuberculosis, the 'Captain of the Men of Death.' The time in Portugal came perhaps too late, and was too short. She was unwell after they came back. After her journal was completed, and shortly before Christmas, she went to Carlisle, to prepare her brother William's house for his marriage. There, or upon the journey, she caught a cold, which very shortly developed seriously. She returned to the Lakes, and was moved to

Rydal Mount. Wordsworth and Mrs Wordsworth had been staying at Westminster, with their nephew Christopher, but they were summoned to the north by the news. Before many weeks had passed, it was seen that she could not recover. When this was broken to her, Quillinan says:

'She asked me several particulars, to every one of which I answered faithfully, so she was put in full possession of the truth. The spirit in which she received the awful intimation, and with which she continues to bear to look it in the face, is in every respect admirable; so humble, so self-censuring for faults of temper, which the delicacy of her conscience magnifies, yet so cheerful; so hopeful of the mercy of God, so willing to live, yet so resigned to die; and so loving withal, and so considerate.'

Through spring, she lingered into summer. On June 1, 1847, Mrs Arnold writes to Crabb Robinson:

'Dear Mr Wordsworth comes forth occasionally to see his old friends, and yesterday morning when I saw him slowly and sadly approaching by our birch-tree, I hastened to meet him, and found that he would prefer walking with me around our garden boundary, to entering the house and encountering the larger party. So we wandered about here, and then I accompanied him to Rydal, and he walked back again with me, through the great field, as you can so well picture to yourself. This quiet intercourse gave me the opportunity of seeing how entirely our dear friends are prepared to bow with submission to God's will. No one can tell better than yourself how much they will feel it, for you have had full opportunities of seeing how completely Dora was the joy and sunshine of their lives; but, by her own composure and cheerful submission, and willingness to relinquish all earthly hopes and possessions, she is teaching

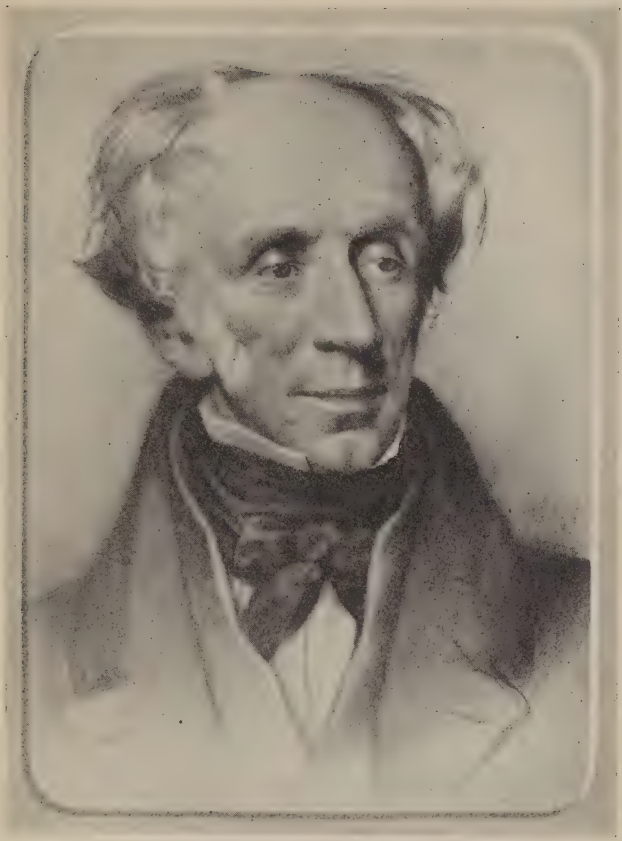
them to bear the greatest sorrow which could have befallen them.'

Dora died on the 9th of July, and was buried in Grasmere churchyard. After this date Wordsworth writes: 'We see little of poor Mr Quillinan. Mrs Wordsworth seldom goes down the hill, and I have not the courage to go to his house.' But there is much of Quillinan and of his quiet, solitary life in his *Request*:

'Two graves in Grasmere vale, yew-shaded both,
My all of life, if life be love, comprise.
In one the mother of my children lies,
Fate's blameless victim in her bloom of youth:
The other holds the constancy and truth
That never failed me under darker skies,
When subtle wrongs perplex'd me. Her, whose eyes
Saw light through every wildering maze uncouth.
Between those graves a space remains for me:
O lay me there, wherever I may be
When met by Death's pale angel; so in peace
My dust near theirs may slumber till the day
Of final retribution or release
For mortal life's reanimated clay.'

§ 14. THE LAST DECADE

We turn back now to recapitulate the last decade of Wordsworth's life. Once or twice in the poems of this period we catch some echo of the question which the *Ode on Immortality* left incompletely answered. That question was, how to ensure that days might continue 'bound each to each in natural piety'? How to ensure that one may live under Nature's 'more habitual sway,' under a sway that is



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

'fastened to the affections'? One can do no more in attempting to transfer that question, than to repeat it as it is often repeated by Wordsworth. In 1806 the response was given in the four lines:

> 'Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
> Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
> To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.'

The one thing insisted upon in the answer, is the one thing insisted upon in the question—the binding of 'the beauty given by the senses to the affections, to the moral part of our nature.' By what creed, by what theory Wordsworth desired this to be done is comparatively unimportant; for him it could be maintained by no creed, no theory. The binding process was spontaneously felt, or lost. More than Coleridge, much more than the very greatest who have passed the seven gates and reached the field where all is fresh and green, was Wordsworth as a reed a god blows fitfully. For that reason, though poets have loved and will continue to love him, he will never be as dear to them as those who more completely comprehend the other world. He climbed so high as to challenge comparison with the highest, and it is by comparison with them that we are sensible of his deficiencies. Had we none other than Wordsworth to guide us, our knowledge of the realms of poetry would be far from complete. He climbed the mountain; the mists broke behind him, he gazed back earnestly, devotedly. After the period of his greatest utterances, he gazed doggedly in the same fixed direction; and he saw, and spontaneously spoke, at long intervals. Such later moments are recorded,

for instance, by the *Lines on an Evening of Extraordinary Beauty* in 1816, and by the lines *Glad sight whenever new with old* in 1845. But when he gazed with patient, admiring eye and the mists did not break; when the new was not joined with the old, he remained, so far as poetry is concerned:

'The Wanderer lost in more determined gloom.'

Wordsworth challenged comparison with the highest, and made the effort and the sacrifices to be included in their company. By temperament not unlike Dante, laughter and jest were left aside. It meant that for the personal story of his later years, while his inner self walked in limbo with eyes sad, grave, and down-bent, the outer man had the transient affairs of life to deal with, and had to create the equipment, superficial and ordinary to other men, for handling them. A casual acquaintance as a young man, knowing the course that Wordsworth steered, would not, perhaps, have prophesied that he would deal with life so well. He was, it is true, comparatively free from physical ills. With the exception of his troublesome inflammation of the eyes, he was served better than most of his literary friends. The periods of depression against which he fought were not caused by physical pain. We have explained them as being in part due to Wordsworth's possessive love for Dora, and his fear of losing her. One of Wordsworth's outstanding characteristics, despite the coolness and reserve which the world credited to him, was his inner, violent affection for the things, and especially the people, that he loved. Crabb Robinson repeated with approval the remark of Rogers,

that few men knew how Wordsworth loved his friends; and his strong attachment to his family was in truth a troublous fire. Dorothy long knew the subtle demonstrations, the 'tenderness that never sleeps,' and the unselfish attitude thwarted and contradicted by its own intensity; and Dora experienced to the full what Dorothy had called 'a sort of restless watchfulness which I know not how to describe.'

This, in Wordsworth's life, is the point I would emphasize: that having few external interests, and having great and immeasurable affections in his veins, there occurred inevitably a passionate and vital conflict between his needs and the individual freedom of those surrounding him. Wordsworth's last years form in one sense sorry reading; the sorrow does not stir for pettiness, but for a problem which a great heart found insoluble. In several ways he had the gift of prophecy; the lines he wrote of Oswald forty years before this time, remained applicable to himself:

> '. . . strong feelings to his heart
> Are natural; and from no one can be learnt
> More of man's thoughts and ways than his experience
> Has given him power to teach.'

He spent his life in gaining a clearer and a truer view of strong emotions than is granted to most men; he paid the price, as Raleigh put it, 'in a great and incurable solitude of spirit'; and others paid the price too. It is inadequate to think that Wordsworth as a Churchman and a Tory had changed completely from his impetuous youth. He might no longer spread his affections; they were in straitened

paths, but they were there, and would be in the blood as long as his frame held together. Those affections, by their strength, bent others to their service.

It is interesting to note that after Dora's marriage Wordsworth brought *The Borderers* to light. He published it in 1842. At this time Wordsworth notes that the tragedy had been lying from 1796 'till within the last two or three months unregarded among my papers, without being mentioned even to my most intimate friends. Having, however, impressions upon my mind which made me unwilling to destroy the MS., I determined to undertake the responsibility of publishing it during my own life, rather than impose upon my successors the task of deciding its fate. Accordingly, it has been revised with some care; but, as it was at first written, and is now published, without any view to its exhibition upon the stage, not the slightest alteration has been made in the conduct of the story, or the composition of the characters; above all, in respect to the two leading persons of the drama, I felt no inducement to make any change.' 'Had it been the work of a later period of life, it would have been different in some respects from what it is now. The plot would have been something more complex, and a greater variety of characters introduced to relieve the mind from the pressure of incidents so mournful. The manners also would have been more attended to. My care was almost exclusively given to the passions and the character, and the position in which the persons in the drama stood relatively to each other, that the reader (for I had then no thought of the stage) might be moved, and to a degree instructed, by lights penetrating somewhat into the depths

of our nature. In this endeavour, I cannot think, upon a very late review, that I have failed.'

It is worth while turning to the passions and the characters involved in *The Borderers*—to the philosophic villain Oswald, to the lovers, Idonea and Marmaduke, and to Herbert, the blind father of Idonea. The situation in which Herbert and Idonea appear is the one in which Wordsworth commonly pictured Dora and himself. Before the two appear upon the stage, we hear of Herbert:

> 'For that another in his Child's affection
> Should hold a place, as if 'twere robbery,
> He seems to quarrel with the very thought.'

They enter, Herbert leaning upon Idonea; and, being weary, seat themselves on a green bank to rest:

> HER. (*after some time*). Idonea, you are silent,
> And I divine the cause.
> IDON. Do not reproach me:
> I pondered patiently your wish and will
> When I gave way to your request; and now,
> When I behold the ruins of that face,
> Those eyeballs dark—dark beyond hope of light,
> And think that they were blasted for my sake,
> The name of Marmaduke is blown away:
> Father, I would not change that sacred feeling
> For all this world can give.
> HER. Nay, be composed:
> Few minutes gone a faintness overspread
> My frame, and I bethought me of two things
> I ne'er had heart to separate—my grave,
> And thee, my Child!
> IDON. Believe me, honoured Sire!
> 'Tis weariness that breeds these gloomy fancies,

And you mistake the cause: you hear the woods
Resound with music, could you see the sun,
And look upon the pleasant face of Nature—
HER. I comprehend thee—I should be as cheerful
As if we two were twins; two songsters bred
In the same nest, my spring-time one with thine.
My fancies, fancies if they be, are such
As come, dear Child! from a far deeper source
Than bodily weariness. While here we sit
I feel my strength returning.—The bequest
Of thy kind Patroness, which to receive
We have thus far adventured, will suffice
To save thee from the extreme of penury;
But when thy Father must lie down and die,
How wilt thou stand alone?
IDON. Is he not strong?
Is he not valiant?
HER. Am I then so soon
Forgotten? have my warnings passed so quickly
Out of thy mind? My dear, my only, Child;
Thou wouldst be leaning on a broken reed—
This Marmaduke—....

When they have ventured on, Herbert supported by Idonea, Marmaduke and Oswald re-enter:

MAR. This instant will we stop him—
OSW. Be not hasty,
For sometimes, in despite of my conviction,
He tempted me to think the Story true;
'Tis plain he loves the Maid, and what he said
That savoured of aversion to thy name
Appeared the genuine colour of his soul—
Anxiety lest mischief should befall her
After his death.

MAR. . I have been much deceived.
OSW. But sure he loves the Maiden, and never love
Could find delight to nurse itself so strangely,
Thus to torment her with *inventions!*—death—
There must be truth in this.
MAR. Truth in his story!
He must have felt it then, known what it was,
And in such wise to rack her gentle heart
Had been a tenfold cruelty.
OSW. Strange pleasures
Do we poor mortals cater for ourselves!
To see him thus provoke her tenderness
With tales of weakness and infirmity!
I'd wager on his life for twenty years.

There is no profit in attempting to follow a forced comparison any farther. In the passages quoted we may see something of the frame of mind which prompted the postscript in the letter on page 133; and the suggestion is that Wordsworth, left alone in 1842, turned to the passages and read on with a feeling that his life had caught up with past imagery.

His later solitude laid Wordsworth open to the comment he made about this time on Crabbe. Conscious of it or not, Wordsworth too leaned chiefly on the society of women. In the company of Miss Fenwick, dictating the garrulous, unreliable, and invaluable notes, Wordsworth found a useful hobby. Quillinan is loud in his praises of Miss Fenwick; among her other virtues she had helped to persuade Wordsworth to consent to Dora's marriage. In 1843 he writes:

'Miss Fenwick is more than a favourite with them [Mr and Mrs Wordsworth], and I do not think they can

now live in perfect ease without her. No wonder. She is a trump. There is more solid sense in union with genuine goodness in her than goes to the composition of any hundred and fifty good and sensible persons of everyday occurrence.'

Later he repeats that neither Mr nor Mrs Wordsworth 'is ever quite happy without her.' Another witness at the Lakes has left an amusing testimony as to the conduct of the hobby. 'He goes every day to see Miss Fenwick,' wrote Harriet Martineau to Crabb Robinson, '(he always needs some such daily object: she is the worthiest possible), gives her a smacking kiss and sits down before her fire to open his mind!'

We have dwelt upon depressions at perhaps a disproportionate length. Despite the stretches and periods of melancholy character, his general tenor of life now became a comfortable solemnity. Much might be said about his relapse to ordinariness and to general contentment. By 1843 it was becoming complete. Harriet Martineau says she cannot feel the old man to be so great as his works. As he became quieter, he became dull. He joined the company of 'laurelled worthies who sweetened royal toils with verse'—William Johnston's phrase for the laureateship. He shone as an obedient sun for tourists who thronged the neighbourhood. He who withstood all earlier discouragement now walked and talked in an admiring society, occasionally playing Petruchio to dissentients.

'I have been dining at Rydal, after walking about a considerable part of the morning through the waters and the mists with the Bard who seems to defy all weathers;

and who called this a beautiful, soft, solemn day: and so it was: though somewhat insidiously soft, for a mackintosh was hardly proof against its insinuation.'

So wrote Quillinan to Crabb Robinson in 1843; but Wordsworth thought the tone was flippant. Flippant too he would have thought the short article which appeared in the *Illustrated London News* of February 10, 1855, which Mr Lucas once reprinted, and to which he now calls my attention. 'Wordsworth,' said Mr Lucas in *Variety Lane*, 'it might be held, owes us a laugh now and then. In his lifetime he pleaded guilty to only one conscious joke, and when a man of advanced age who so understood his lowlier neighbours does that, we must find jokes for him. His joke, by the way, was this. He had been walking, he said, when a carter stopped him with the question, "Have you seen my wife?" And what was the poet's gravity-removing reply? "My dear sir," he answered, "I did not even know that you had a wife." That is not exactly in the acceptable manner of Mr Stephen Leacock; but it will do. Providence, however, came in and made it better; for the American critic, Mr William Winter, when a small boy, was taken to Rydal by his father on a pilgrimage to the Mount. While the elders sat in the garden, the little Winter was sent out to the poet with a message. "Please, sir," said he to the author of *The Excursion*, "your wife wants you." "You shouldn't say 'your wife,'" replied the poet reprovingly, "you should say 'Mrs Wordsworth.'" "But she *is* your wife, isn't she?" was the answer of astonished Young America.'

The newspaper article referred to, which should be included in the files of Wordsworthiana for its subtle and

true humour—humour which is by no means levity—is as follows:

'Our notice last week of the sister of William Wordsworth has afforded us an opportunity of hearing from the lips of a true poet an account of a visit which he made to Wordsworth. His story is in every way characteristic of the great author of "The Excursion"; and we have our friend's permission to tell it, but are not at liberty to mention his name.

'"In the summer of 1846, when on a visit to the Lake District, I called upon Mr Wordsworth, to convey a message from his daughter, then in London. He received me with a kindly shake of the hand. 'I am told,' said he, 'that you write poetry; but I never read a line of your compositions, and I don't intend.' I suppose I must have looked surprised, for he added, before I could find time to reply, 'You must not think me rude in this, for I never read anybody's poetry but my own, and haven't done so for five-and-twenty years.' Doubtless I smiled. 'You think this is vanity, but it is not; for I only read my own poetry to correct its faults, and make it as good as I can.'

'"I endeavoured to change the subject by some general remarks on the beauty of the scenery visible from his garden, in which our interview had taken place. 'What is the name of that mountain?' I inquired. 'God bless me,' he said, 'have you not read my poems? Why, that's Nab-Scar. There are frequent allusions to it in my writings. Don't you remember the lines?' and he repeated in a clear, distinct voice a well-known passage from 'The Excursion.'

'"The name of Southey having been accidentally mentioned, I inquired as a matter of literary history whether, as was commonly believed, he had impaired his health and his intellect by too much mental exertion, and thus brought on that comparative darkness of mind which clouded the

last months of his life. 'By no means,' said Wordsworth; 'Southey was a most methodical worker. He systematized his time. He was never confused or in a hurry, and got through a deal of labour with an amount of ease and comfort which your hurry-scurry kind of people can neither accomplish nor understand. The truth is—at least, I think so—that his mind was thrown off its balance by the death of his first wife, and never afterwards wholly recovered itself.'

'"I reminded him at this point that the late Mr Laman Blanchard, whose sad story was then fresh to the recollection of the public, had been reduced to a state of insanity by a similar bereavement. From that moment my name seemed to fade away from Mr Wordsworth's recollection, and he always addressed me during the remainder of our interview as Mr Laman Blanchard. His sister, Miss Wordsworth, was wheeled into the garden in a little garden-carriage, or chair, impelled by Mrs Wordsworth. I wore on my head a Glengarry travelling-cap, with a sprig of heather; and Miss Wordsworth no sooner caught sight of me than she exclaimed in a shrill voice, 'Who's that man, brother?' 'Oh, nobody, my dear,' he replied. 'It's only Mr Laman Blanchard.' I gently hinted my right name. 'It's all the same to her, poor thing,' he rejoined.

'"He would possibly have added more, but the unfortunate lady interrupted him by commencing to sing the well-known Scotch song—

> A Highland lad my love was born,
> The Lowland laws he held in scorn.

She sang one verse with much correctness, and was commencing another when Mr Wordsworth led me away. 'This is a painful scene, Mr Blanchard,' he said; 'let us go into my room, and I will read you some more passages from my poems about Nab-Scar.'"'

We have left behind some of the entries in the album. Richard Monckton Milnes, Lord Houghton, signed at Rydal in September, 1838, and Margaret Gillies drew a pencilled head of Kate Southey in the book on December 31. Miss Gillies stayed for several weeks, making a miniature portrait of Wordsworth on ivory, which had been commissioned by Moxon for engraving. Miss Gillies's portrait of Miss Fenwick called forth two sonnets from Wordsworth, which speak of his affection for 'the heart-affianced sister of our love.' There is then an unfinished sketch, perhaps of Dora, by Stone; following that a more interesting and extremely illegible contribution by William Lisle Bowles, dated April, 1839. At that time, as we have recorded, Wordsworth had been moving restlessly about the country, as if attempting to escape the thought of losing Dora. The interest of the entry comes chiefly from the fact that Bowles's *Sonnets*, published half a century before, had stimulated both Wordsworth and Coleridge in their early efforts. In Coleridge's over-generous phrase, Bowles made him a poet. Cottle, in his recollections of Coleridge as a young man, says that he 'generally contrived, either by direct amalgamation, or digression, to notice, in the warmest encomiastic language, Bishop Berkeley, David Hartley, or Mr Bowles....He urged the purchase of three works, indispensable to all who wished to excel in sound reasoning, or a correct taste; namely: Simpson's Euclid; Hartley on Man; and Bowles's Poems.' Wordsworth could recall studying the sonnets on London Bridge not long after Coleridge had been poring over them at Christ's.

Bowles was renowned among his contemporaries for his excessive timidity, for which he expressed no shame. Samuel Rogers repeated a story told him by Wordsworth, that 'Wordsworth, Mrs Wordsworth, Dora, and Bowles went on the Thames in a boat one fine summer's day. Though the water was smooth as glass, Bowles very soon became so alarmed, that he insisted on being set ashore; upon which Wordsworth said to him: "Your confessing your cowardice is the most striking instance of valour that I ever met with."' But he had a sedentary man's admiration for physical bravery. When he became vicar of Bremhill, in Wiltshire, he laboured at *The Parochial History of Bremhill*, and dedicated it to Lord Arundel because 'Under the same BANNERS of the CROSS at the battle of Graun, in Hungary, one of your Lordship's heroic ancestors and an ancestor of mine fought side by side.' At Bremhill, to quote Professor Herford, as 'a country clergyman of leisure and means, he continued at long intervals to lift up his little light in the midst of the glory he had hoped to kindle.' He sang with vicarious valour of the Battle of the Nile; and Rogers's story may recall amusingly that his most ambitious poem was the *Spirit of Discovery by Sea*.

He was now getting very old. He concluded his invitation to Wordsworth, as Mr Gordon Wordsworth tells me, with the postscript: 'I am as *Wizen* as a *Witch* and as *Deaf* as a *Post*.' He retained his enthusiasm for parochial history. Near Bremhill is Maud Heath's Causeway, a stone pitched path along the road running through the heavy clay lands beside the Wiltshire Avon, from Chippenham to the summit of Bremhillwick Hill. It was made under the will of Maud

Heath (died *c.* 1474) for the benefit of market folk going to Chippenham, who found the low-lying roads impassable in winter. Bowles was anxious to commemorate the donor of the causeway, and with the aid of the Marquis of Lansdowne raised funds sufficient to set up a statue of Maud Heath on a pillar on the summit of the hill. The pillar is forty feet high, and forms a notable landmark. On it are three dials, with inscriptions by Bowles. On the east is:

VOLAT TEMPUS

Oh, early passenger, look up, be wise:
And think how, night and day, TIME onward FLIES.

Opposite noon there is:

QUUM TEMPUS HABEMUS, OPEREMUR BONUM

Life steals away—this hour, O man, is lent thee
Patient to work the work of Him that sent thee.

For evening:

REDIBO: TU NUNQUAM

Haste, traveller! The sun is sinking low;
He shall return again—but NEVER THOU.

And on the base is carved:

Thou who dost pause on this aerial height,
Where MAUD HEATH's Pathway winds in shade or light,
Christian wayfarer in a world of strife,
Be still,—and ponder on the path of life.

I do not think Bowles was too infirm to take Wordsworth to see this memorial; afterwards he copied the last inscription in the album.

In 1840 Mrs Lydia Huntley Sigourney, the mild

American poetess, visited Rydal and wrote in the album. Though her verses beginning

'Alas, how vain...'

are hardly worthy of repetition, in a letter to Bernard Barton there is a passage concerning her stay in England. She deplores that she was not able to see a host of distinguished persons, 'whose names were on my tablets, *to be seen if possible*'; but

'Wordsworth I saw, and it was worth a voyage over the faithless ocean to see him in his family-circle, the evening lamp-light falling softly on his noble brow, and to walk with him through his beautiful grounds and listen to his conversation. These memories are more to me than the scenery of Westmoreland, for we have lakes and mountains enough at home, but no Wordsworth.... I love the Motherland dearly, and have reason to do so. But you will not infer that my own native shores are rendered less dear. Oh No!'

Mrs Sigourney was the only American to sign in Dora's book; and she went back to Connecticut pleased with the incident. In 1843 there is an illegible contribution by Agnes Strickland. In 1844 William Hamilton again visited Wordsworth, and the day that we have mentioned earlier was spent at Loughrigg Tarn. In 1845 are two entries for which we may pause.

When Dora and Quillinan left the Lakes in April, setting out for Portugal and better health, I think Wordsworth accompanied them as far as London. He was certainly in town by May, attending the Queen's ball in borrowed plumage. He stayed with Henry Taylor, whose account of Wordsworth has been quoted earlier; and from

habit he had Dora's album with him. The following was the contribution of that trip:

'*The Eagle*

'He clasps the crag with hooked hands:
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world he stands.

'The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls:
He watches from his mountain-walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

'A. T.'

'Like an Æolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtakes
Far thought with music that it makes.

'A. T.'

The two disconnected entries are in Tennyson's neat writing, and the signature to each is the carefully executed monogram which he used for such memorials. The version of *The Eagle* is interesting for the first line, since 'crooked hands' replaces 'hooked hands' in the published version. The second contribution—a verse far better than the preceding—I do not find elsewhere. It was perhaps written on a different occasion. In a letter to Professor Reed, dated July 1, Wordsworth says:

'I saw Tennyson, when I was in London, several times. He is decidedly the first of our living poets, and I hope will live to give the world better things. You will be pleased to hear that he expressed in the strongest terms his gratitude to my writings. To this I was far from indifferent though persuaded that he is not much in sympathy with what I should myself most value in my attempts, viz. the spiritu-

The Eagle.

He clasps the crag with crooked hands:
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls:
He watches from his mountain-walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

Like an Aolian harp that wakes
No certain air, but overtakes
Far thought with music that it makes.

ality with which I have endeavoured to invest the material universe, and the moral relations under which I have wished to exhibit its most ordinary appearances. . . .'

Wordsworth had noticed Tennyson fifteen years before, when the latter was still at Cambridge. Writing from his brother's home, Trinity Lodge, Wordsworth at that time said:

'We have a respectable show of blossom in poetry (i.e. at the University)—two brothers of the name of Tennyson, one in particular not a little promising.'

At this later meeting Wordsworth, though not in sympathy with Tennyson's aim, was impressed by the younger man —indeed, few were not at meeting him.

Wordsworth left London with an inflammation in his eyes, perhaps caused by the city's dust. He was back at Rydal in June and there through the summer. At this time the Irish dramatist, Sheridan Knowles, wrote in the album:

'Love is not a plant that grows in the dull Earth!
Springs by the Calendar!—must wait for sun—
For rain!—matures by parts!—must take its time
To stem, to leaf, to bud, to blow!—It owns
A richer soil and boasts a quicker seed!
You look for it and see it not; and, lo!
E'en while you look, the peerless flower is up,
Consummate in the birth.

'1st *July*, 1845.' 'JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

At this period of his career, Sheridan Knowles was forsaking his industrious efforts to create a poetical drama, and was turning to the 'somewhat extreme type of Evangeli-

calism' which occupied the remainder of his life. He was, however, not absorbed in 'better things' entirely to the exclusion of what he called his unconverted days upon the stage; and in *Father and Son* there is a pretty picture of the very old Baptist minister teaching the very young Edmund Gosse to read Shakespeare.

During the next four years there is no entry in Dora's album. Wordsworth lived quietly after Dora's death. As a very old man, he was patient, mild, and silent. There is little need to enter details, and we pass towards the end. In January, 1849, on the day after Hartley Coleridge's death, Wordsworth went to the churchyard to arrange for the plot of ground. Turning to the sexton as he left, he added, 'Keep the ground for us,—we are old people, and it cannot be for long.' But the year was passed in good health. In September Mr Gosse notes that Swinburne's parents took Algernon (then aged twelve) with them in calling upon Wordsworth at Rydal. Miss Elizabeth Sewell was present, and wrote in her journal:

'He [Wordsworth] was so very nice to Algernon, especially at last, that I could have cried, as Algernon did when we went away.... LadyJane [Swinburne] said what a pleasure it had been to bring Algernon, and how he had looked forward to it, as he was already acquainted with his writings. Wordsworth's answer was, "Yes, he supposed Algernon might have read *We are Seven* and some other little things. There was nothing in his writings that would do the boy harm, and there were somethings that might do him good." Some observation was made about Algernon's not forgetting his visit, and Wordsworth's words were, "He did not think Algernon would forget him."'

Joy comes and goes; hope ebbs and flows
Like the wave.
Change doth unknit the tranquil strength of men.
Love lends life a little grace,
A few sad smiles: and then,
Both are laid in one cold place,
In the grave.

M. Arnold.
Fox How. June 5. 1852.

At the beginning of 1850 there is the following entry in the album:

'Joy comes and goes; hope ebbs and flows
Like the wave.
Change doth unknit the tranquil strength of men.
Love lends life a little grace,
A few sad smiles: and then,
Both are laid in one cold place,
In the Grave.

'M. ARNOLD,

'Fox How, *Jany.* 5, 1850.'

Wordsworth was well when Arnold signed; but two months later, just before his eightieth birthday, he went out in the evening to watch the sunset, and took a chill from sitting too long in the sharp air. He passed quietly away on April 23. The best of many tributes at the time is that of Arnold, pausing over the scene of Dora's picnic, and painting with a few, plain strokes:

'Raised are the dripping oars,
Silent the boat! the lake,
Lovely and soft as a dream,
Swims in the sheen of the moon.
The mountains stand at its head,
Clear in the pure June night,
But the valleys are flooded with haze.
Rydal and Fairfield are there;
In the shadow Wordsworth lies dead.
So it is, so it will be for aye.
Nature is fresh as of old,
Is lovely; a mortal is dead.'

There is one more entry:

'*Prayer for Tranquillity.*

'Dear Lord, who, at thy blessed will,
Didst make the raging wind be still,
And smooth the tossing of the Sea,
Oh! cause our stormy griefs to flee,
Our wild tempestuous thoughts allay,
And fires of passion send away.
Conduct us here to perfect peace,
When all our earthly transports cease,
And lastly, while to Thee we cling,
Our souls to that blest haven bring,
Above the sphere of Care and Woe
Where earthly blasts can never blow,
With Thee to dwell, supremely blest,
Anchored on everlasting rest.

September 17, 1850.' 'SARA COLERIDGE,

Barring some notes for colours, in Quillinan's hand, on the last page of all, intended perhaps for sketching, this ends the text of Dora's book.

§ 15. L'ENVOI

We have lingered for some time in the age of albums; customs change, and the little books are not now so familiar. Of the attitude towards them then, the best expression is found in the verses Southey wrote for his own daughter about a year after he signed in Dora's book:

'Little Book, in green and gold,
Thou art thus bedight to hold
Robert Southey's Album Rhymes,
Wrung from him in busy times,

Not a few to his vexation,
By importune application;
Some in half-sarcastic strain,
More against than with the grain;
Other some, he must confess,
Bubbles blown in idleness;
Some in earnest, some in jest,
Good for little at the best:
Yet, because his Daughter dear
Would collect them fondly here,
Little Book, in gold and green,
Thou art not unfitly seen
Thus apparell'd for her pleasure,
Like the casket of a treasure.
Other owner, well I know,
Never more can prize thee so.

'Little Book, when thou art old,
Time will dim thy green and gold.
Little Book, thou wilt outlive
The pleasure thou wert made to give:
Dear domestic recollections,
Home-born loves, and old affections,
Incommunicable they:
And when these have passed away,
As perforce they must, from earth,
Where is then thy former worth?
Other value, then, I ween,
Little Book, may supervene,
Happily if unto some
Thou in due descent shouldst come,
Who would something find in thee
Like a relic's sanctity,
And in whom thou may'st awake,
For thy former owner's sake,

A pious thought, a natural sigh,
A feeling of mortality.

'When those feelings, and that race,
Have in course of time given place,
Little worth, and little prized,
Disregarded and despised,
Thou wilt then be bought and sold,
In thy faded green and gold.
Then, unless some curious eye
Thee upon the shelf should spy,
Dust will gather on thee there,
And the worms that never spare,
Feed their fill within, and hide,
Burrowing safely in thy side,
Till transfigured out they come
From that emblem of the tomb:
Or, by mould and damp consumed,
Thou to perish may'st be doomed.

'But if some collector find thee,
He will, as a prize, re-bind thee;
And thou may'st again be seen
Gayly drest in gold and green.'

It is pleasant to think that Dora's book is still in the stage of the second stanza, and may be for ever. I know nothing of the 'due descent' of Kate Southey's 'Little Book in green and gold'; but Dora's stayed with Quillinan for a time. He writes about it in a letter to Miss Fenwick, dated from Loughrigg Holm on July 25, 1849. After speaking of Christopher Wordsworth, Quillinan mentions that:

'His daughter, Dora's god-daughter (what a pity they

did not call her Dora!) at whose baptism I was present with the Godmother, has long since been prospectively the owner of the most precious book I have—and she became so by mere chance. Dr C. W. when he was here, was looking over it, having often seen it before, and when he put it back into my hand he said, "That is the most precious Album in England." "Do you think so?" I answered; and his reply was an emphatic, unmistakeable "Yes." Not another word passed between us about it, but, from that day its destination was altered in my mind....

Quillinan goes on to relate that he afterwards showed the album to Lady Wake, who

'... expressed some fear that it might be mislaid and lost at Castle Ashby. "Which would much distress me," I said, "for it is not mine." "Not yours! Whose is it then?" she asked in some surprise. "It belongs to Priscilla Wordsworth." "And who is she?" "The daughter of a man who had the sense and the feeling to value it." I then told her the story about it that I have just told you.... It goes, when I am gone, to a child who never heard of it, because her father had, quite unconsciously, the grace to win it for her by a few genuine words.... You see my beloved Dora's "Cousin Chris" has long had something endearing about him to me, in spite of his ultra-protestant dogmatisms.'

When Quillinan died in the summer of 1851 from a cold caught on a fishing excursion, the book went as he directed. It has been with the Wordsworth family ever since. Having called up what pictures readily occurred, the disconnected fragments are now closed upon themselves; the book in its blue silk cover put back into the black case which ties both ways; and our visit to the drawing-room of Rydal Mount is at an end.

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